

ON_{the} TRAIL

The defaunaution bulletin
n°35. Events from the 1st January to the 31th March, 2022



Quarterly information and analysis report on endangered
animals poaching and smuggling
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ON_{the} TRAIL

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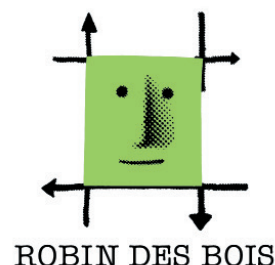
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NOTE AND ADVICE TO READERS

"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 + elephants / rhinos / felines
- Elephants + rhinos / hippos / walruses / sperm whales
- 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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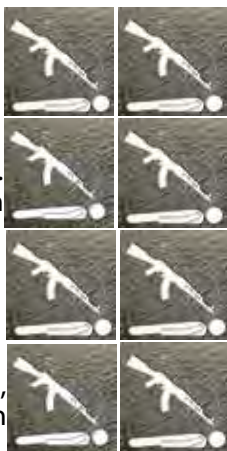
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AFRICA

BENIN

February 8 and 10, 2022
W National Park, Alibori
Department, Benin. Border
with Burkina Faso and Niger.

Two patrols were victims of improvised explosive devices. Four Beninese rangers, 2 African Parks drivers, a Benin Armed Forces soldier, and a French ex-military wildlife law enforcement officer in the park were killed. African Parks, February 9 and 11, 2022; Le Parisien, February 10, 2022; Game Rangers Association of Africa, February 12, 2022.¹



ETHIOPIA

January 23, 2022
Gambela National Park, Gambela
People's Region, Ethiopia

Garwich Pal, a park ranger at the 5,000 km² Gambela National Park, home to elephants, giraffes, hippos, and big cats, was killed by suspected members of the Murle tribe. The Murle, a southern Sudanese tribe, are known to conduct armed raids in the Gambela area. They are accused of killing 208 people and kidnapping 102 children and livestock in April 2016. Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, January 26, 2022.²



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 21, 2022

Between Mabenga and Kasali, Virunga
National Park, North Kivu Province,
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Two men believed to be members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda died in a clash with Virunga Park guards.

News.cd, February 22, 2022.³



ZIMBABWE

March 12, 2022

Malilangwe Conservancy, Chiredzi,
Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Death of an unknown poacher on Saturday, March 12, in an exchange of fire with rangers. The Herald, March 17, 2022.⁴



ASIA

INDIA

March 11, 2022

Gahamkhunti, Dhenkanal District, State of
Odisha, India

Death of a forest officer after an attack by an injured elephant. Biswaranjan Panigrahi was charged while trying to anesthetize him with a dart gun. The 40-year-old did not survive his injuries. The same elephant had killed 2 people last year. His wound on the right front leg was probably inflicted by a poacher's bullet.

Hindustan Times, March 12, 2022; The Times of India, March 17, 2022.⁵

See also page 42, Thursday 3 February 2022, Golaghat district, State of Assam, India.

PAKISTAN

About the assassination of Nazim Jokhio, see page 131.



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°35
Value on the black market according
to media or official sources
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of 1kg of pangolin scales

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Uganda	150	10 (2022)
Asia	India	1,400	35 (2022)
		2,935	36 (2022)
		3,325	51 (2022)

Value of a pangolin

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Malawi	5,000	8 (2022)

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

January 26, 2022

Cameroon

Escaping the fate of becoming bush meat among sordid market stalls in the capital, an old and large (2.6 kg) white-bellied pangolin was brought to the sanctuary of the Tikki Hywood Foundation. After treatment, he was released 8 hours away, near a watering hole and many palm trees, in the heart of the forest.

Tikki Hywood Foundation, February 2, 2022.¹



FAMILY AFFAIRS
February 8 and March 9, 2022
Bonis and Bertoua, East Region,
Cameroon



A massive tomb of over 1,000 pangolins. This is the number of mammals represented by the 246 kg of scales found in the home of a trafficker. The search led to the seizure of 34 kg of bush meat, 3 other pangolins, and monkey carcasses in his refrigerator. The operation was conducted with the technical support of an anti-wildlife trafficking organization, The Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA). The suspect used his entire family, including his wife and children, to buy wholesale from poachers and retail from bush meat dealers. The meat was auctioned and the money went to the State, while the pangolin scales were transferred to Yaoundé. The court sentenced Nguekeng Kitio Chamberlain to 19 months in prison and ordered him to pay 180,000 CFA francs (300 US\$) in court costs and 3,000,000 CFA francs (5,130 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, February 9, 2022; Camer.be, February 21, 2022; LAGA, February and March 2022.²

GABON

January 11 and February 18, 2022
Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Agents of the Judicial Police and the Anti-Poaching Directorate, supported by the NGO Conservation Justice, arrested a trafficker in a hotel with 46 kg of giant pangolin (*Manis gigantea*) scales. He was preparing to sell them after posting photos on social networks. Auguste Tchoua Rilewe, a 37-year-old French-born Gabonese, said he obtained the scales from hunters along the Kango-Bifoun-Lambaréné stretch. Placed in police custody and brought before the public prosecutor, the court found him guilty of the possession of a product of an entirely protected species and sentenced him to 3 months in prison, a fine of 300,000 CFA francs (510 US\$) and damages of 3,000,000 CFA francs (5,100 US\$) to be paid to the Administration of Water and Forests.

EAGLE, January 13, 2022; Conservation Justice, January 20 and February 2022.³



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

January 23, 2022

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

Murder, gang rape, looting, sexual slavery, recruitment of child soldiers, abduction of aid workers... and pangolins. The Nduma Defense of Congo, also known as Mai-Mai Sheka, is one of the many militias operating in eastern DRC as part of the Kivu conflict. Its members are demanding a ransom to release a captured giant pangolin back into the wild. Proof-of-life photographs of the animal have been sent to conservationists in the Mweso community, who fear that paying a ransom would set a tragic precedent for armed groups to take the park's entire protected wildlife hostage. Adams Cassinga, January 24, 2022; 24hcongo, January 27, 2022.⁴

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

February 11, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

One arrest. Seizure of 3 kg of pangolin scales. Big Life Foundation, February 2022.⁵

March 3, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Seizure of a live pangolin. Two arrests. Big Life Foundation, March 3, 2022.⁶

MALAWI

January 28, 2022

Rumphi, Northern Region, Malawi

Police arrested 6 men in possession of a live pangolin that they were trying to sell. Ambere Mshani, aged 31, Kennedy Tembo, aged 52, Yozgani Kumwenda, aged 49, Simon Tembo, aged 36, Malamulo Jere, aged 45, and Brighton Shaba, aged 49, were arrested at Samedia Lodge and will appear in court. The department has recorded 33 cases of illegal pangolin trafficking in 2020 and 42 in 2021. This is a "growing trade," according to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife, Brighton Kumchedwa. Malawi 24, January 29 and February 6, 2022.⁷

March 4, 2022

Mangochi, Southern Region, Malawi

Not a month goes by without a pangolin seizure in this country. A specimen was found in the home of a Pakistani businessman, Allie Mahommed, aged 41. The owner and 4 Malawians involved - Innocent Chiuja, aged 35, Malinga Kaunda, aged 34, Jailosi Khozomba, aged 27, and Ishmael Japan, aged 26, were arrested while negotiating the estimated sale price of 4 million kwacha (5,000 US\$). All pleaded not guilty before they appeared in court. The pangolin, hidden in a bag, was bought in Nayuchi, Machinga District, 85 km away, on the border with Mozambique.

Arrests related to this trade, fuelled by some foreign nationals, more than tripled in Malawi between 2019 and 2020. The global pangolin population is estimated to have declined by 80 per cent over the past 20 years.

Malawi 24, March 5, 2022; Nyasa Times, March 6, and April 22, 2022; Voice of America, March 6, 2022.⁸



Unlike the Malawians, the businessman is not in handcuffs

March 16, 2022

Mangochi, Southern Region, Malawi

You can find anything in the malls. Alex Jumbe, aged 50, was trying to sell a pangolin, hidden in a black laptop bag, at that of Mwambwanjira. The arrested trafficker claimed to be an herbalist and to have acquired the animal in Mozambique, whose border is about 50 km away. He will appear in court for unlawful possession of a specimen of a listed protected species, in violation of section 110(b) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

Malawi 24, March 17, 2022.⁹

UGANDA

March 2022

Pabbo, Northern Region, Uganda

Rescue of 2 pangolins, one of whom is seriously injured. However, the prognosis is favourable. One arrest. Three species are present in the country: the Temminck's ground pangolin, the giant pangolin, and the white-bellied pangolin. Pangolins are sold on the live black market for about 150 US\$/kg. Daily Monitor, April 10, 2022.¹⁰



ZIMBABWE

Early January, 2022

Manica Highlands, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe. Border with Mozambique.



A 10.3 kg female pangolin, just rescued from trafficking, arrives at the Tikki Hywood Foundation shelter.

Tikki Hywood Foundation, January 5, 2022.¹¹

January 21, 2022

Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe



In August 2021, 2 men from Nkulumane were stopped by police officers with a bag containing pangolin armour weighing 1.163 kg. Freeman Nonjerai and Simplisiyo Manzunza pleaded not guilty when they appeared before the regional magistrate, who nonetheless sentenced them both to 9 years in prison.

NewsDay, January 26, 2022.¹²

February 3, 2022

Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Munashe Maposa, aged 23, Oswald Chingwara, aged 21, and Vincent Sigauke, aged 23, were charged with attempting to sell a male pangolin on the street for 6,000 US\$.

The Sunday Mail, February 8, 2022.¹³

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early February 2022

Waterberg District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A female Temminck's ground pangolin rescued from the illegal trade is admitted to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, which treats animals free of charge relying solely on donations. This pangolin was rescued through the efforts of the African Pangolin Working Group, Vaalwater Endangered Species Unit, Thabazimbi SAPS (South African Police Service) Stock theft unit, Thabazimbi Community Policing Forum, and Dwayne Gonsalves. Under rehabilitation, she will soon begin her program for reintroduction into the wild.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, February 10, 2022.¹⁴

Early March 2022
Welgevonden Game Reserve, Limpopo Province,
South Africa



Another Temminck's ground pangolin rescued from poachers was admitted to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, founded in 2016. The male, subject to stress, dehydration, and malnutrition, was given protein smoothies and medication. The pangolins are often taken in bad shape from poachers in South Africa and in neighbouring countries, notably in Namibia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Here, they are treated like in intensive care units. They are secured in a secret ward for safety during the treatment, which can last from a few weeks to a few months before they can be released into the wild. Veterinarian Kelsey Skinner, who has been treating them for years says, "they have just the most unique little personalities."

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, March 6, 2022; France 24 (with AFP), April 13, 2022.¹⁵

March 24, 2022
Secunda, Mpumalanga Province,
South Africa



The Temminck's ground pangolin had remained at the bottom of a bag for 3 weeks. The hunger and thirst strike was imposed on him by Tichoana Chifamba, a 41-year-old father of 2 children, who wanted to sell him in South Africa after capturing him in Zimbabwe (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.16). The chief veterinarian of the Johannesburg clinic specializing in pangolin care declared in court that in the 20 years of her career, she had never seen such a case of extreme cruelty. Chifamba was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the possession of a legally protected specimen and 18 months for illegally entering South Africa. The 2 sentences run concurrently. He has appealed.

African Pangolin Working Group, March 25, 2022; SAPS, March 25, 2022; Ridge Times, March 29, 2022.¹⁶

NAMIBIA

January 14, 2022
Oshikango, Ohangwena Region, Namibia.
Border with Angola.

Arrest of 2 men in possession of dried pangolin organs valued at 50,000 Namibian dollars (3,145 US\$).

Republikein, January 18, 2022.¹⁷

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

Early January 2022
Zhaoping County, Hezhou Prefecture,
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region,
China



Three individuals who sought to make a fortune on the backs of pangolins are in prison for 12 and 13 years. The case started with the seizure of 6 live pangolins caught in Viet Nam on a bus going from Nanning to Zhaoping County. This was in January 2020. The investigation proved that in one year, the trio had sold 120 infant pangolins with an overall estimated value of 135,000 US\$ or 1,125 US\$/pangolin.

Zhaoping Public Security, January 10, 2022.¹⁸

February 2022
Teng County, Wuzhou Prefecture,
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region,
China



Behind the jade jewelry were 167 pangolin scales. The small-scale trafficker was fined 785 US\$ and ordered to pay damages of 2,356 US\$. He apologized via the county media. He was selling one scale for 5 US\$.

Wuzhou Zero Distance, February 23, 2022.¹⁹

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

Early February and May 2022
Santan, Great Aceh Regency, Aceh
Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Ahmad Yani, Firmansyah and Sandika were trying to sell 22 kg of scales near a railway. They were remanded in custody for 20 days.

The first was sentenced to 3 years in prison and a fine of 50 million rupiah (3,445 US\$), the two others to 4 years in prison and a fine of 100 million rupiah. Aceh Journal National Network, March 21, 2022; Garda Animalia, May 27, 2022.²⁰

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 24, 2022

Bendan, Sleman Regency, Special Administrative Region of Yogyakarta, Java Island, Indonesia

A.P. and his wife were coming from their home in Trenggalek, 180 km to the East, with 2.5 kg of scales and a young male Sunda pangolin weighing 3.3 kg. The credit for the interception goes to the BKSDA (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) in Yogyakarta and the COP (Center for Orangutan Protection). Center for Orangutan Protection, March 16, 2022.²¹

February 25, 2022

Sorkam, Central Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A.S. was the owner, and E.P.K. was the salesman. They had 150 kg of scales in 3 bags in the back of the car, which is equivalent to 500 to 600 pangolins according to Hadi Wahyudi, a spokesman of the province's police. Kompas.com, February 27, 2022.²²

March 8, 2022

Kaur Regency, Bengkulu Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

The police, nonchalantly, turned up and, well informed, set about trading pangolin scales. Khoiril Firmansyah unpacked 33 kg of them. According to the police spokesman, the crushed scales are used to make methamphetamine. IDN Times Lampung, March 14, 2022.²³

MALAYSIA

January 2022

District of Bera, State of Pahang, Malaysia

Arrest of 3 men transporting a live pangolin in the trunk of their vehicle. Kosmo, February 2, 2022.²⁴

January 21, 2022

Sibu, State of Sarawak, Malaysia

Sentence of a 58-year-old man to 6 months in prison and a fine of 28,200 ringgit (6,750 US\$). He was hiding 28,000 scales (total weight 22.14 kg) and birds in his house. Berita Harian, January 25, 2022.²⁵



January 12, 2022

State of Sarawak, Malaysia

The Indonesian will be deported from Malaysia after serving one year in jail for possessing and attempting to sell 5,058 pangolin scales with a total weight of 4.95 kg. Harian Metro, January 19, 2022.²⁶



VIET NAM

January 7, 2022

Quang Tri Province, Viet Nam

Interception of Le Minh Quan who was carrying 4 pangolins with a total weight of 16 kg. Bao Phap luat Viet Nam, January 8, 2022.²⁷

Mid-January 2022

Kon Tum Province, Viet Nam

Three Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*) rescued from trafficking are expected to arrive at Cuc Phuong National Park in Ninh Binh Province, 900 km away. SVW, January 17, 2022.²⁸

January 18, 2022

Thuong Xuan District, Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam

Cam Ba Dung, on the morning of January 18, went to cut grass in his acacia plantation and took the opportunity to "pick up" a 2.4 kg Sunda pangolin under unknown circumstances. In the afternoon, he contacted Cam Ba Cong to bring the pangolin to a nearby restaurant. At 9:45 p.m., they were intercepted by the traffic police. Cam Ba Cong was riding his motorcycle and Cam Ba Dung was on the back with the pangolin. The mammal was released shortly after. The 2 Xuan Chinh residents are charged with violating Article 244 of the Penal Code which protects endangered animals. Bao dan sinh, April 15, 2022.²⁹

February 19, 2022

Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam

Twelve pangolins rescued from trafficking and rehabilitated after a long stay in Cuc Phuong National Park were released back into a confidential habitat after a 1,500 km, 2-day road trip. The action, on the occasion of World Pangolin Day, is credited to the NGO Save Vietnam's Wildlife (SVW). SVW, February 19, 2022.³⁰

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

January 4, 2022

Negipalli, Bargarh District, State of Odisha, India

Based on a tipoff, the STF (Special Task Force) and the foresters had set a trap on the road leading from Bargarh to Bheden, near the temple of Khansumen Devi. Jagat Thela was caught with a live pangolin in his hands. Ommcom News, January 4, 2022.³¹

January 8, 2022

Tol Khurd, Raigad District, State of Maharashtra, India

Rescue of a live pangolin. Five arrests. Five accomplices are on the run. The former hostage is in good health. The Indian Express, January 10, 2022.³²

January 9, 2022

Mahtosh, Udam Singh Nagar District, State of Uttarakhand, India

Sukhwinder Singh was holding a rarity. He had captured him a few months ago in the Gularbhoj forest. The giant pangolin weighs 34 kg. He was seized by the STF and the Terai forest division. Dainik Jagran, January 9, 2022; The Times of India, January 10, 2022.³³

January 18, 2022

Bargaon, Balangir District, State of Odisha, India



Seizure of a live pangolin. Arrest of Ajit Kumar Budek.

The Munsif Daily, January 20, 2022.³⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 20, 2022

Siliguri, Siliguri District, State of West Bengal, India

Seizure of 48 kg of scales estimated to be worth 5 million rupees (1,400 US\$/kg). Three arrests. At least a hundred pangolins were captured in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. After being boiled, their scales were removed to end up in 4 big bags that were to travel through Nepal before reaching China. A father and son were members of the trio from Haryana and Punjab.

Khabar Samay, January 20, 2022; The Telegraph India, January 21, 2022.³⁵

January 26, 2022

Thane, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of 5.5 kg of scales valued at 1.2 million rupees (16,142 US\$ or 2,935 US\$/kg). Arrest of a 31-year-old man. In this post-Covid era, fear of poverty and of the future are growing and there is a high demand for pangolin scales, which are supposed to bring wealth into homes.

The Free Press Journal, January 27, 2022.³⁶

January 27, 2022

Sonapur, Kamrup Metropolitan District, State of Assam, India



The meeting in the Dichang Resort, room number 2, went wrong. The 7 scale traders were buying them little by little from villagers in Meghalaya and were about to sell them. Seizure of 4.1 kg, 7 mobile phones, and 3 motorcycles.

The Sentinel, Jan. 28, 2022; WCCB, Jan. 28, 2022.³⁷

January 27, 2022

Alipurduar, Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India

Five years in prison for Rashidul Haque and Anisur Rahaman. In September 2021, they entered the Jalgaon National Park with a weapon and killed a pangolin.

The Times of India, January 31, 2022.³⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 30, 2022

Koraput District, State of Odisha, India

Madhab and Jagabandhu Paraja were apprehended on the road from Koraput to Boriguma. They were carrying a live pangolin.

The Statesman, January 30, 2022.³⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 7, 2022

Tinsukia District, State of Assam, India



WCCB (Wildlife Crime Control Bureau) and Digboi foresters raid the Gogoi Dhaba on the side of the National Expressway. They seize 6.3 kg of pangolin scales from Amal Bikash Sakma, Lakhi Ram Sakma, and Basant Kr Sakma who were coming from Arunachal Pradesh.

Northeast Now, February 7, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), February 9, 2022.⁴⁰

February 16 and 19, 2022
Navi Mumbai, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India



The 4 men, aged 24 to 44, were driving at night with a live pangolin weighing 10.5 kg and measuring 125 cm when they were stopped at an intersection. Their secret passenger was in a black bag. Called to the rescue, WWA (Wildlife Welfare Association) volunteers and Thane foresters took him to a clinic. He was put on an IV drip and after several hours, finally agreed to stick out his tongue and eat mealworms.

The Free Press Journal, February 18, 2022; Hindustan Times, February 20, 2022.⁴¹

February 17, 2022
Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

Tipped off by an informant, Nagpur and Pench National Park forest officials swooped down on Prabhakar Bhimrao Maraskolhe, Shalikram Baban Radpachi, and Sukhdev Gangadhar Jadhav who were trying to sell 2.5 kg of pangolin scales. Nagpur Today, February 18, 2022.⁴²

February 19, 2022
Barpeta District, State of Assam, India

Arrest of Mafizuddin and Sanjay Kumar near the Beki River. Rescue of a live Chinese pangolin. Northeast Now, February 20, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), February 21, 2022.⁴³



February 22, 2022
Haldwani District, State of Uttarakhand, India

He was carrying a plastic bag containing 1.66 kg of pangolin scales. WCCB 'bloodhounds' sleuths assisted by Special Task Force (STF) police officers intercepted him on the road between Sitarganj (Udham Singh Nagar District) and Chourgalia (Nainital District). WCCB, February 23, 2022.⁴⁴

March 5, 2022
Jhumpura, Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a live pangolin weighing over 7 kg. Dillip Nayak wanted to sell him for 1.5 million rupees (19,946 US\$).

KalingaTV, March 5, 2022.⁴⁵

March 10, 2022
Bakhri, West Champaran District, State of Bihar, India

Two Indian pangolins, one of whom was a juvenile, were rescued from imminent death. Sanjay and Nagendar Kumar were taking them by bike to Ramnagar where they were expected to participate in a banquet, but on the plates.

Live Hindustan, March 10, 2022; Down To Earth, March 11, 2022.⁴⁶



March 12, 2022
Malajkhanda Area, Balaghat District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Joint operation by WCCB, foresters and STF. Seizure of one live pangolin. Six arrests.

ETV Bharat, March 13, 2022; WCCB, March 13, 2022.⁴⁷

March 16, 2022
Khanapara and Sonaighuli, Guwahati District, State of Assam, India

- Three arrests. Seizure of 684 grams of Chinese pangolin scales, a scale and 3 mobile phones.

- One arrest. Lobai Boro was traveling from Shillong to Guwahati to sell 1,000 grams of scales. He was arrested near Don Bosco School.

Northeast Now, March 17, 2022; The Bothside News, March 17, 2022; WCCB, March 19, 2022.⁴⁸



March 20, 2022
Mahulpada, Nuapada District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a live pangolin, a quad bike and several cell phones. Three arrests.

Argus News, March 21, 2022.⁴⁹

March 25, 2022

Dhauli, Khordha District, State of Odisha, India

Arrest of Biswajit Pattnaik by the STF. Seizure of 4 kg of scales.

Odisha TV, March 26, 2022.⁵⁰

March 30, 2022

Thane, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure near the Hindustan Hotel of 3 kg of scales with an estimated value of 750,000 rupees (9,970 US\$ or 3,325 US\$/kg). Arrest of Arun Babi Raul. A police spokesman recalls the traditional uses of scales and organs for alternative medicine and black magic. He adds that the rumour that scales bring wealth quickly is spreading widely.

The Free Press Journal, March 31, 2022.⁵¹

March 31, 2022

Kokrajhar District, State of Assam, India

Joint operation of SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal) and foresters. Seizure of 4.5 kg of scales. Two arrests.

Asian News International, April 1, 2022; My News Northeast, April 1, 2022.⁵²

NEPAL

January 5, 2022

Koteshwor, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

Looking for a buyer for 1.5 kg of pangolin scales, they found investigators from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB). Rukman Bahadur and Bhaibindra Bahadur Magar are in custody.

Birendra Johari, January 5, 2022; Nepal Press, January 5, 2022.⁵³

EUROPE

GERMANY

January 26, 2022

Düsseldorf International Airport, North Rhine-Westphalia State, Germany

A woman arriving from Ghana carries a skinned and roasted pangolin in her luggage. She explains to customs officials that it is a delicacy and that she had bought it ready to eat from a farm in Ghana to enjoy with her family in Germany. Dead or alive, pangolins are seized when they arrive in Europe.

Süddeutsche Zeitung, January 26, 2022.⁵⁴

PANGOLINS, ELEPHANTS / RHINOS / FELINES

AFRICA

KENYA

March 4, 2022

Taveta, Taita Taveta County, Kenya. Border with Tanzania.

The DCI (Directorate of Criminal Investigations) communicates:

"Wildlife trophies worth over 5 million shillings (43,460 US\$) were this afternoon recovered in Taita Taveta county and one suspect identified as Bakari Barisa, arrested.

In an intelligence led operation conducted by a joint team of Serious Crimes detectives [DCI] and their counterparts from the elite Crime Research & Intelligence Bureau, the 40-year-old man was seized in Taveta township trading in pangolin scales worth 5 million shillings (43,460 US\$) and elephant tusks with a street value of 400,000 shillings (3,480 US\$). Posing as well oiled unscrupulous business men who rule the underworld, the sleuths led the man to his Waterloo before pouncing on him.

Pangolin scales which fetch a fortune in the black market are used for spiritual protection and financial rituals, making the mammal one of the most sought after and trafficked in the world.

The suspect has since been whisked to our headquarters where he is being grilled before arraignment."

Directorate of Criminal Investigations, March 4, 2022; The Star, March 4, 2022.¹



NAMIBIA

April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

Namibia

Wildlife crime weekly reports are not available since the beginning of 2022. One has to be content with the official figures for the fiscal year published by the safety and security minister: 108 elephant tusks, 117 dead and live pangolins, 59 black and white rhino horns, and 42 prohibited firearms were seized, and 770 suspects were arrested for wildlife crimes.

Namibian Sun, April 23, 2022.²

NIGERIA

February 2, 2022

Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria



145 kg of raw ivory and 839.4 kg of pangolin scales were seized from a Toyota minibus. The shipment is estimated to be worth more than 3 billion naira (7.6 million US\$). The anti-smuggling operation was conducted by Nigerian Customs in cooperation with the NGO Wildlife Justice Commission.

Nigerian Tribune, February 9, 2022; Premium Times, February 9, 2022; The Punch, March 17 and 23, 2022.³

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

March 7, 2022

Brazzaville, Department of Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo



Barthélémy Ntaba sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment suspended, fined 500,000 CFA francs (850 US\$) and ordered to pay 1.5 million CFA francs in damages. The trial of his accomplice Meldas Obene, a career soldier, is separate. Both are responsible for the death of a female elephant and her baby. They may hold the sinister record for the smallest tusk put on the market in the 20th and 21st centuries, 7 to 8 cm long. Ntaba went to cut it off at the back of the calf's mouth. The duo also sought to sell 4.95 kg of giant pangolin scales (see "On the Trail" n°33, p.21).

Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), March 2022.⁴



ASIA

INDIA

January 4, 2022

Batabari, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India

Seizure of a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) in poor condition and 1.5 kg of pangolin scales. Two arrests.

Hindustan Times, January 6, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 6, 2022.⁵

January 7, 2022

Telibani, Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India

A leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) with a bullet hole, an elephant tusk, 1.77 kg of pangolin scales and Madan Kumar Jayapura who is arrested. The Statesman, January 7, 2022; The Times of India, January 8, 2022.⁶

INDONESIA

January 25, 2022

Kaye Aceh, Southwest Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure from Y.F., T.N., and S.B. of Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I) bones estimated to be worth 150 million rupiah (10,410 US\$) along with pangolin scales (343.19 grams).

iNews Aceh, February 11, 2022.⁷

VIET NAM

January 5 and June 22, 2022

Port of Da Nang and Da Nang Municipality, Viet Nam



A hidden organisation was bringing in "everyday consumer" goods from Africa. With each container shipment, the import-export consignee changed its name and address. Thanks to an investigation in Viet Nam and information from abroad, Nguyen Duc Tai, a resident of Nam Phuc Tang, Ha Tinh province, was arrested. Evidence was seized from his home, including a bag of pangolin scales used as a sample, accounting documents and computers. Tai is the alleged organizer of the import of a sea container containing 138 kg of rhinoceros horns and 3.1 tonnes of lion bones to Da Nang in July 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.75).

The sea container was targeted. It came from Nigeria. It arrived in Da Nang Port on January 5, 2022. Customs, reinforced by the police and the Special Anti-Smuggling Unit, opened it on January

11. After 3 days of inventory, the results confirmed the authorities' intuition. Among the declared bags of cashew nuts, there was 450 kg of raw ivory and 6.2 tonnes of pangolin scales.

The sender was said to be Cargo Trade Nigeria Limited (32 Cha, Llaw Industrial Estate Kano Niger, IA, Nigeria), the consignee was said to be Quang Nhat Long Co (145 Dong Da, Thach Thang Ward. , Hai Chau District, Da Nang).

Cashew nuts and scales or ivory, see "On the Trail" n°3 p.66, n°6 p.95, n°16 p.71, n°21 p.48, n°25 p.52, Covid-19 special edition p.21 and n°28 p.65.

ENV, January 14, 2022; Customs News, January 15, 2022; Ho Chi Minh City Police Newspaper, June 22, 2022; VietnamPlus, June 22, 2022.⁸

January 12, 2022

Chau Tien, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

Mrs. Luong Thi Bich living in Chau Hoi was illegally transporting 3 dead animals on a motorcycle. She was in possession of 2 Asian golden cats (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I) with a total weight of 23.5 kg and a pangolin weighing one kg. Bao Nghe An, January 13, 2022.⁹



ELEPHANTS



African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) and white-faced whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna viduata*).
Photo Miguel A. Casado

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°35
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	Kenya	885	18 (2022)
		3,130	22 (2022)
		870	23 (2022)
		940	35 (2022)
		970	45 (2022)
	Zimbabwe	170	52 (2022)

WESTERN AFRICA

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

February 17 and March 2, 2022
Abengourou, Comoé District, Côte d'Ivoire

Gold, silver, and ivory smuggling. Two traffickers were arrested in front of BBC cameras with 15 tusks, some of which were extremely small and came from very young individuals. They were carrying them in the trunk of their car about 30 km from the border with Ghana. The local jeweller and goldsmith claimed to have bought the ivory from a Ghanaian. His accomplice, a 66-year-old man from Burkina Faso, was in charge of finding buyers for the ivory. Paul Emile Kouamé was sentenced to 6 months in prison and a fine of 300,000 CFA francs (510 US\$), while Ousmane Ouedraogo was released.

Comoé District, see "On the Trail" n°13 p.88, n°16 p.12 and n°32 p.22.

EAGLE, February 22, 2022; EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire, February 2022.¹



March 21 and 24, 2022
Bondoukou, Zanzan District, Côte d'Ivoire. Border with Ghana.

One tail and 5 tusks. Kambou Sansan Issouf, an animal trafficker specializing in elephant poaching and ivory smuggling, was arrested with technical support from EAGLE - Côte d'Ivoire in the early afternoon as he was about to sell his loot in a restaurant. He admitted to killing elephants in the Comoé National Park, located about 100 km away and which has only 120 elephants left. This has been his hunting ground since 2013. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison and fined 500,000 CFA francs (850 US\$). The Ivorian wildlife law is far from being an adequate deterrent considering that there are only between 200 and 600 elephants left in the entire country. EAGLE, March 23, 2022; Linfodrome, March 28, 2022; EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire, March 2022.²



TOGO

March 22 and June 3, 2022
Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo. Border with Ghana.

Ibrahim Alassani, "owner" of the tusks, and Yendine Douti and Raphaël Amegnigan, who were smuggling them across the borders of the region, particularly Burkina Faso, were arrested in the middle of negotiations for the sale of 6 small elephant tusks hidden in a bag. Searches of the homes and stores of the 3 defendants in the neighbourhoods of Bè, Agoè, and Hédzranawoé led to the discovery of another piece of ivory and banknotes.

The three men were each sentenced to 6 months in prison, 4 of which were suspended, and a fine of 200,000 CFA francs (330 US\$).

EAGLE, March 28, 2022; Wakat Séra, March 29, 2022; EAGLE Togo, March 2022; Ndarinfo, June 14, 2022.³



CENTRAL AFRICA

ANGOLA

February 17, 2022
Cacuaco, Luanda Province, Angola

Seizure of 4 raw tusks, 21 rings, and 45 bracelets. The ivory items were allegedly purchased in Bengo province and were destined for "foreign" clients. The 3 traffickers were also in possession of a tape measure and an electronic scale.

Portal de Angola, February 18, 2022.⁴

GABON

January 15, 2022

Mvadi, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon. Border with the Republic of Congo.

Two tusks, hidden under his bed, were seized from the home of Mehoulou Neri. He has been placed under a detention warrant in Libreville pending trial. The NGO Conservation Justice supported the Makokou Judicial Police with the logistics and follow-up of the procedure.

Conservation Justice, January 2022.⁵

February 11 and 12 and April 1, 2022

Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon



Arrest of 2 ivory traffickers with the support of Conservation Justice. Mamadou Diallo from Guinea and Armel Affane from Gabon, alias Lestate, had 2 tusks in their possession. They were presented to the prosecutor of the special court of Libreville.

On April 1, Armel Affane is sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of 475,000 CFA francs (805 US\$). Mamadou Diallo is released.

Conservation Justice, February and April 2022.⁶

February 14 and June 10, 2022

Koula-Moutou, Ogooué-Lolo Province, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon



Aimé Mondjo, aged 43, was arrested around noon by a joint intervention team assisted by the NGO Conservation Justice. In possession of a box containing 2 tusks cut into 6 pieces weighing a total of 20 kg that he was about to sell, the trafficker was taken into custody pending his transfer to Libreville where he will appear before the special court.

He was sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of 2 million CFA francs (3,280 US\$), of which one million was suspended.

EAGLE, February 14, 2022; 7Jours Info, February 17, 2022; Conservation Justice, February and June 2022; Gabonreview, June 13, 2022.⁷

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 6 and 17 and June 10, 2022

Port-Gentil, Province of Ogooué-Maritime, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon



Arrest of 2 brothers with 2 tusks weighing a total of 12 kg. Béranger and Lary Mboutsou are said to have left a village in the Avanga lakes to try to sell them. Ten days later, their supplier, Pierre Taty, alias Lapero, was also arrested.

The 3 men were each sentenced to one year in prison, 3 months of which were suspended, and to a fine of 3.05 million CFA francs (5,000 US\$), of which 2.45 million were suspended. They must also jointly pay 30,000 CFA francs (50 US\$) in damages. Conservation Justice, March and June 2022 ; Gabonreview, June 13, 2022.^{7BIS}

March 7 and June 10, 2022

Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Province, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Hans and Chris face up to 10 years in prison. The 2 traffickers were arrested, with the support of the NGO Conservation Justice, while attempting to sell ivory hidden in backpacks. Karl Obissa, alias "Hans," and Guillaume Moutou Hite, alias "Chris," were caught in possession of 2 tusks cut into 8 pieces weighing a total of 55.6 kg. They were taken into custody at the Libreville Central Prison pending trial.

They are each sentenced to one year's imprisonment, 6 months of which were suspended, and a fine of 1.6 million CFA francs (2,625 US\$), one million of which was suspended. They must also pay one million CFA francs (1,640 US\$) in damages. EAGLE, March 8, 2022; Conservation Justice, March 9 and June 2022; Gabonreview, June 13, 2022.⁸

March 18, 2022

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon



Fernand Yombe and his accomplices were sentenced for ivory trafficking and poaching in an organized gang to 12 months in prison, 6 of which were suspended, a fine of 2,425,000 CFA francs (4,150 US\$) and damages of 2,000,000 CFA francs (3,420 US\$) to the benefit of the administration of Water and Forests (see "On the Trail" n°34 p. 23).

Conservation Justice, March 2022.⁹

March 18, 2022

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon



Fabrice Ngueba (or Gueba) and his 2 accomplices were sentenced to 24 months in prison, 6 of which were suspended, and to a fine of 3 million CFA francs (5,130 US\$) and the same amount in damages for raw ivory trafficking.

See "On the Trail" n°31 p. 19.

Conservation Justice, March 2022.¹⁰

March 22, 2022

Moanda, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon

Two traffickers arrested with 4 tusks in the southeast of the country. They were taken into custody.

People's Daily (with Xinhua), March 23, 2022.¹¹

March 22, 2022

Booué, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Ghislain Biboudi, Patrick Mapangou Nzaou and Urbain Nguilamoutou were arrested for their involvement in the poaching of an elephant. As is often the case, Conservation Justice assisted with the transfer of the poachers to Libreville, logistics, and legal follow-up. They are being held on remand. Conservation Justice, March 2022.¹²

March 26 and June 10, 2022 Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Arrest of 3 traffickers with the support of the NGO Conservation Justice. Two women, Murielle Nzengi Mouvondo and Maggy Dindou, and a Gabonese man, Eric Tcheukam, were apprehended in a local hotel with 2 tusks hidden in a bag.

They were sentenced to one year in prison, 6 months of which were suspended, and fined 1.75 million CFA francs (2,870 US\$). They must also pay one million CFA francs (1,640 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, March 26, 2022; Gabonreview, March 28 and June 13, 2022; Conservation Justice, March and June 2022.¹³



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 19 and May 12, 2022 Oyo, Department of Cuvette, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 14 tusks, including 7 cut into 2 parts, weighing a total of 36 kg. The trafficker was caught red-handed on his motorcycle. The ivory was concealed in a suitcase and it came from villages located in a protected area on the Makoua-Mambili route. His 3 accomplices in the well-organized network were arrested. Pierre Emmanuel Ondongo, Jean De Dieu Apani, Guy François Bango Elea, and André Kamba were sentenced to 5 years in prison and fined 500,000 CFA francs (800 US\$). They will pay 5 million (8,000 US\$) in damages to the State.

EAGLE, February 19, 2022; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), February 2022; Panoramik-actu, March 1, 2022; Congo Media Time, May 19, 2022.¹⁴



EASTERN AFRICA

ETHIOPIA

End of January 2022 Omo National Park, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, Ethiopia

Three elephant carcasses are discovered. It is the work of professional poachers or villagers. The fate of the tusks is unknown. The intense drought is disrupting the pastoral activities of the communities. As a result, herders are reportedly killing more wildlife in this 4,068 km² park, one of the largest in the country, which is also home to lions, leopards, giraffes, and buffalo.

Hailemariam & Roman Foundation, January 27, 2022.¹⁵

KENYA

January 2022 Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya. Border with Tanzania.

Seizure of an African-style carved tusk. A catch made thanks to the intelligence network of the Big Life Foundation, which works with the KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service). The 4 imprisoned traffickers (3 Tanzanians and one Kenyan) were involved in cross-border trafficking.

Big Life Foundation, January 10, 2022.¹⁶

January 5, 2022 Manga, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

Four men were charged at the Voi Magistrate's Court with illegal possession of wildlife trophies. Three of the suspects, Kasungwa Mulu, Jacob Shangala, and Solomon Mwaluma, were arrested by KWS officers in possession of 5 elephant tusks weighing 10.6 kg, as well as 13 bags of sandalwood weighing 287 kg. The 4 men pleaded not guilty and were released on bail of 100,000 Kenyan shillings (880 US\$).

Although wildlife trafficking has decreased in the country, KWS officers are working with local communities to conserve wildlife and eradicate poaching, which is still particularly rampant in Tsavo National Park.

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (with KNA), January 6, 2022.¹⁷

Early January 2022 Matuu, Machakos County, Kenya

Two suspects were arrested at the Matuu bus stop on the way to Nairobi, 80 km away, with a tusk weighing 14 kg estimated to be worth 1.4 million shillings (12,400 US\$ or 885 US\$/kg). The 2 men, arrested by Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officers from Mwingi, in coordination with their counterparts from Lang'ata, Nairobi and police officers from Yatta, were put on remand pending trial.

Capital FM Kenya, January 14, 2022.¹⁸

January 6, 13, 17 and 28, 2022 Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Big Life Foundation ranger operations update for the month of January:

- 5 suspects arrested with 10 kg of ivory and 12 bags of sandalwood (genus *Santalum*).
- 2 suspects arrested with 14.5 kg of ivory.
- 1 suspect arrested with 6 kg of ivory.
- 2 suspects arrested with 25 kg of ivory.

Big Life Foundation, January 2022.¹⁹

January 23, 2022 Olare Orok Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The elephant calf was in the process of being strangled by a trap. Prognosis is favourable. He was reunited with his mother. SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.²⁰



January 26, 2022

Oi Malo Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

The elephant was limping with his left front leg and was struggling to keep up with his herd. The wound was caused by a spear. The prognosis is guarded. SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.²¹

January 28, 2022

Korinda, Busia County, Kenya. Border with Uganda.

Mohamed Abbas, aged 60, and Paul Wafula Njoka, aged 70, were arrested at a police checkpoint on the Busia-Kisumu road by police and KWS with 14 pieces of ivory. The 26 kg of ivory worth 9.1 million shillings (81,340 US\$ or 3,130 US\$/kg) was hidden in a bag among cassava. Their motorcycles and loot were seized and the 2 suspects, a Kenyan and a Ugandan, are in custody.

National Police Service, January 27, 2022; SEEJ-AFRICA (Saving Elephants through Education and Justice), January 28, 2022.²²



January 31, 2022

Lelatich, Nakuru County, Kenya



Arrest of Malefine Momanyi in possession of 5 tusks weighing 30 kg estimated to be worth 3 million shillings (26,070 US\$ or 870 US\$/kg). His bail is set at 2 million shillings.

Mara Elephant Project, January 31, 2022; Nation, February 1, 2022.²³

February 2022

Greater Mara, Narok County, Kenya

Two arrests. Seizure of 2.8 kg of ivory. Mara Elephant Project, February 2022.²⁴

February 4, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Seizure of 55 kg of raw ivory. Three arrests. Big Life Foundation, February 2022.²⁵

February 5, 2022

Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The elephant was wounded below her left eye by a non-poisoned arrow. Her calf remained at a distance with the other 11 family members during the surgery. Prognosis is good.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.²⁶



February 5, 2022

Oi Kinyei Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The adult male was lying on his right side. He was dead. A spear opened a deep wound and caused an infection. The remaining tusks were secured.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.²⁷

March 7, 14 and 23, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

- Discovery of 1.5 kg of ivory by rangers.

- One arrest: 30 kg of ivory.

- One arrest: 14 kg of ivory.

Big Life Foundation, March 7, 14 and 23, 2022.²⁸

February 9, 2022

Oloisukut Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The subadult elephant was walking on 3 legs. The left hind leg had been injured by a thrown spear. The attack was recent. The alarm was given in time. There was no infection. He fell on

the wrong side after anaesthesia. The team was able to turn him over with the help of ropes and the rescue vehicle. Prognosis is good.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.²⁹



February 10, 2022

Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

A G3 rifle magazine, 5 bullets, a bow, arrows, cell phones, SIM cards, hard drives, and laptops, including a fast data processing machine. And ivory. All of this was seized in Joska, from the leader of a Kilimani gang that specializes in wildlife trafficking, gold swindling, cybercrime, and drug dealing. Isaac Mugwandia Macharia was arrested and 5 other suspects are wanted, including Luodom Serge, a Congolese national, and Ian James, who was already involved in wildlife and drug trafficking in December 2021.

The Star, February 11, 2022.³⁰

February 11, 2022

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Fredrick Sababu Mungule, a consignee unknown to the Kenya Revenue Agency (KRA), James Kassiwa, an employee at the port of Mombasa, and Nelson Ayoo, an employee of the Revenue Service, were accused of organizing the smuggling of 1,848.5 kg of raw ivory or 1,099 tusks and tusk sections seized by Singapore Customs and the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) in a 20-foot container declared to be "waster paper" on January 23, 2013 (cf. "On the Trail" n°3 p.58). The container was bound for Viet Nam. None of the 13 witnesses called by the prosecutor provided decisive evidence against the 3 men who frequented the Mombasa port compound. Some of the witnesses, including the lead investigator, were allegedly under pressure and a kind of "law of silence" hung over the trial. Judge Francis Kyambia ruled that there was legal presumption, which would lead the Tribunal to condemn and acquitted the 3 suspects.

A joint team from the Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF), FREELAND Foundation, KWS and the Kenyan police visited Singapore from July 20-27, 2013. In cooperation with the AVA, additional evidence was collected and the 1,848.5 kg of raw ivory was repatriated to Kenya in August 2013 in compliance with CITES regulations. The value of the shipment was then estimated by the Singapore authorities at 2.5 million S\$ or 2.04 million US\$ and 1,105 US\$/kg. Singapore Customs, January 31, 2013; SEEJ-AFRICA (Saving Elephants through Education and Justice), February 11, 2022.³¹



February 11, 2022

Kasigau Ranch, Taita Taveta County, Kenya

Favourable prognosis. The elephant suffered an infected wound after being speared in the lower right foreleg.

A few minutes after this intervention, another elephant in bad shape was reported. He was laying still near a watering hole and limping when he tried to move. Again, this went well. The ears were constantly watered to protect him from the sun and heat. The wound on the bottom of the left front leg just above the foot was caused by a knife.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³²



February 13, 2022

Roan Hill, Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

The baby elephant was crawling behind his family. He was limping with his right hind leg. The knee was swollen. It was getting dark. The vets decided to come back the next day and



found him in the same situation, a few meters away from his mother who was very protective. She had to be anaesthetized before proceeding to anaesthetize the baby. The bullet wounds were deep and infected. Fortunately, the joint was not broken. But veterinarians felt that in the wild it was not sure that he would survive, and the calf was flown to the SWT (Sheldrick Wildlife Trust) orphanage near Nairobi.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³³

February 15, 2022

Ithumba, Tsavo-East National Park, Kenya

Favourable prognosis. The elephant tolerated the anaesthesia and chemical antidote well. He was injured by a spear thrown on the top of the right front leg. He was rubbing insistently against a tree in an attempt to remove the spear before being treated.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³⁴

February 15, 2022

Kibera, Nairobi County, Kenya

Jesse Mwangi Karanja appeared in court for the trafficking of tusks with a total weight of 3 kilos and an estimated value of 300,000 shillings (2,830 US\$ or 940 US\$/kg). In June 2020, he had tried to sell them with 2 accomplices to plainclothes policemen at the Shell gas station in Karen. The traffickers were native of Dagoretti. The accused pleaded not guilty. He was released on a cash bail of 50,000 shillings (435 US\$) or a guarantee of 200,000 shillings (1,740 US\$). Other witnesses are expected to testify before the investigation is completed.

The Star, February 16, 2022.³⁵

February 23, 2022

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya

The rangers found him dead. He died of peritonitis after being speared.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³⁶

February 27, 2022

Nyekweri Forest, Narok County, Kenya

The big elephant is in good health except for a purulent wound that makes him limp. He is grazing alone in the middle of the forest. Under anaesthesia, the spear wound was cleaned and antibiotics were applied and injected. Prognosis is guarded.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³⁷



March 8, 2022

Tsavo-East National Park, Kenya

The elephant had an arrow embedded in his left side. Other than that, he appeared to be in good health. When the vets took action, the arrow was detached but the wound was deep and infected. It was hot. During the surgery, he was constantly sprayed with cold water, including his ears. The prognosis is relatively optimistic. The individual has been reunited with his family.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.³⁸

March 12, 2022

Mara Triangle, Narok County, Kenya

The subadult elephant was moving with difficulty. She had been spotted by rangers near the border with Tanzania.

When the vets arrived, she was about 800 meters away from her family. She was anesthetized with the correct dosage of etorphine and azaperone. Her right front knee was encircled by the steel wire of a snare that penetrated the flesh. The wound was treated with water, green clay, antibiotics, and anti-inflammatories. Favourable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.³⁹



March 15, 2022

Kimana Sanctuary, Kajiado County, Kenya

The iconic elephant's tusks were among the largest on the planet. Big Life rangers found Tolstoy, one of the last "super-tuskers," with a spear wound on his right front leg. This was not an accident: he frequently played a dangerous game called "crop-raiding." In 2018, he had already been treated for 3 spear wounds caused during his crop raids. Put to sleep for treatment by the helicopter-borne SWT/KWS mobile veterinary unit, the elephant, who had withstood 50 years of poaching and droughts, fought for 7 hours before dying. A victim of the war with farmers, Tolstoy would have deserved a peaceful death.

Big Life Foundation, March 16, 2022; SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022; SWT, April 30, 2022.⁴⁰



Tolstói

March 18, 2022

Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The prognosis is favourable. The healthy adult elephant had an arrow in his right side. He, too, was rubbing against a tree to get rid of it. Fortunately, it was neither poisoned nor barbed. The vets anesthetized him and treated him properly.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁴¹

March 28, 2022

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Acquittal of Omolo Nyangaga. He was in possession of 4 kg of raw ivory in September 2019. His accomplice died before the trial. There was insufficient evidence to prove his guilt.

SEEJ-AFRICA (Saving Elephants through Education and Justice), March 29, 2022.⁴²



March 30, 2022

Nakuru, Nakuru County, and Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

And on the stand are again Fredrick Sababu Mungule and James Kassiwa. The judge is in Nakuru. She had investigated the case in Mombasa before being appointed to Nakuru a few months before the trial and the accused, their lawyers, witnesses and the audience were in Mombasa. The proceedings were conducted by video conference. This time, they are suspected of having contributed to the attempted smuggling of 3,827 kg of raw ivory to Asia in conspiracy. The shipment was seized in the port of Mombasa on January 14, 2013. After fleeing, Mungule surrendered to the police on January 31 and was released on bail of one million shillings or 11,600 US\$. Mungule is accused of smuggling the ivory into a container loaded by the East African Commercial and Shipping Company and Kassiwa is accused of allowing the container to enter the port of Mombasa with full knowledge that Mungule's business, Mwamba Freight Services, was not declared to the Kenya Revenue Agency (KRA). The evidence this time was considered sufficient by the judge. When she asked the prosecutor in Mombasa if an escort was available before handing down her verdict, everyone understood that the suspects who arrived free at the court would walk



=>

out handcuffed. They were sentenced to 2 years in prison and did not appeal. They are the only ones convicted after the wave of raw ivory smuggling that overwhelmed the port of Mombasa during 2013: Hong Kong seizure on January 3, 2013 of 1,330 kg of raw ivory from Mombasa, Mombasa seizure on January 14, 2013 of 3,827 kg of raw ivory, Singapore seizure on January 23, 2013 of 1,848 kg of raw ivory from Mombasa, Dubai seizure on May 1, 2013 of 1,478 kg of raw ivory (259 tusks) in a container from Mombasa to Malaysia (see "On the Trail" n°1 p.31), Mombasa seizure of 2,898 kg of raw ivory in October 2013, and seizure in Kampala, Uganda, in October 2013 of 1.9 tonnes of raw ivory en route to Mombasa (see "On the Trail" n°3 p.59). The raw ivory seized in Hong Kong was from Mozambican elephants, the seizure in the port of Mombasa was from Tanzanian and Kenyan elephants. SEEJ-AFRICA (Saving Elephants through Education and Justice), January 14, 2013, and March 30, 2022; The Star, February 7, 2013.⁴³

March 30, 2022

Mgeno Ranch, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

The elephant's carcass was found by herders, who alerted rangers, who alerted veterinarians, who deduced from the necropsy that the elephant had been poisoned.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁴⁴



March 30, 2022

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Abdikheir Gababa Ibrahim and Abdullah Yusuf Adan were fined one million shillings (10,000 US\$) or sentenced to 5 years in prison in case of non-payment. They were caught in the act of transporting 37 kg of raw ivory with an estimated value of 36,000 US\$ or 970 US\$/kg.

SEEJ-AFRICA (Saving Elephants through Education and Justice), March 30 and 31, 2022.⁴⁵



MALAWI

End of February 2022

Vwaza Swamp Reserve, Northern Region, Malawi

An injured young elephant is being treated by the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust's emergency response unit. Veterinarian Amanda Salb was able to put the elephant to sleep to treat the multiple wounds, likely from gunshots. The elephant was fitted with a bulky satellite collar to help track him.

Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, February 28, 2022.⁴⁶



MOZAMBIQUE

January 24, 2022

Boane District, Maputo Province, Mozambique



Police seized 50 ivory tusks from a house in the suburbs of Maputo. The Criminal Investigation Service (Sernic), in coordination with the Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC), says the ivory may have come from the killing of 25 elephants from different conservation areas across the country. No arrests have been made in connection with the case.

Since 2009, poaching has claimed the lives of at least 10,000 elephants in Mozambique. In the Niassa Reserve in the north of the country, the total number of individuals fell from 12,000 to 4,400 between 2011 and 2014. More recent reports indicate that the country lost 48 per cent of its elephant population between 2011 and 2016.

Club of Mozambique, January 24, 2022.⁴⁷

Mid-February 2022

Tete, Tete Province, Mozambique

They were preparing to sell under the counter the ivory hidden in a house. The 2 men found in possession of the 11 seized tusks were arrested. The traffickers denied any involvement in the poaching and stated that they were only intermediaries hired for the transaction.

Source: AIM

Club of Mozambique, February 20, 2022.⁴⁸

UGANDA

February 2022

Pujwang, Northern Region, Uganda

All was well for Nicholas Opiyo on this sunny morning. He was checking on the leopard cubs at Pakuba Lodge inside Murchison Falls National Park when on his walkie-talkie he heard the calls for help from his colleagues who were chasing a dozen poachers from Pujwang, a village on the Nile, who had just killed an elephant with bows and arrows for his meat rather than his ivory. Four of them were finally caught. The area is naturally suitable for elephants and hippos, and in the last 2 years during the pandemic, poaching has taken on an unprecedented scale.

Daily Monitor, April 2, 2022.⁴⁹

TANZANIA

March 17, 2022

Mtwara, Mtwara Region, Tanzania

Bad strategy for Chande Ngayaga and Mohamed Rupembe. The 2 poachers, who could have paid off a fine of 63 million shillings (27,600 US\$) in the first instance, saw this possibility disappear on appeal: instead, they were sentenced to 20 years in prison. They had confessed that they had tried to flee and dispose of a tusk worth 31.5 million shillings (14,220 US\$) before being arrested on their motorcycle.

Court of Appeal of Tanzania, March 17, 2022; Daily News, April 11, 2022.⁵⁰



ZIMBABWE

Early January 2022

Ngamo Forest, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Poisoned with cyanide. The carcasses of 7 elephants, killed about 2 months earlier, were found by the Conservation & Wildlife Fund and the Forestry Commission and ZimParks. The poison had been placed along a path travelled by the pachyderms. The victims were female elephants, juveniles, and one male elephant. The ivory has reportedly been secured and the investigation is ongoing.

Conservation & Wildlife Fund, January 16, 2022.⁵¹



January 5, 2022

Guruve, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe

Two poachers were arrested by undercover officers in possession of 3 pieces of ivory weighing a total of 15 kg and with an estimated value of 2,567 US\$, or 170 US\$/kg. James Ngocho, aged 37, and Peacewell Muranganwa, aged 36, pleaded not guilty and were remanded in custody.

ZimEye, January 13, 2022.⁵²

February 10, 2022

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Nicholas Joseph Ncube, aged 27, from Sinderella, and Sifiso Ngwenya, aged 51, from Railways, were arrested with a bag containing 4 pieces of raw ivory. Intelligence officers teamed up with the CID Minerals, Flora and Fauna Unit, and Zimparks officers to foil the 2 men, one of whom jumped from a moving vehicle in an attempt to escape.

Fauna and Flora Zimbabwe, February 13, 2022; Zimbabwe Situation, February 13, 2022.⁵³

February 21, 2022

Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Leonard Ndebele, aged 33, was arrested at about 6:00 p.m. along Kazungula Road with 2 elephant tusks weighing 37.86 kg. He intended to sell them to a man identified as Stanley Mhaka. He was injured by police officers and representatives of the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and was sent to the hospital on court order and later released on bail.

The Chronicle, February 24, 2022; Pindula, February 28, 2022.⁵⁴

February 21, 2022

Zikungwa, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Bhekithemba Ndlovu, aged 31, and Eshuet Sitsha, aged 37, were seen loitering in the elephant corridor. The suspects were apprehended by community members and subsequently arrested by Lupane police for illegal possession of dangerous substances: they were found to be in possession of 10 oranges filled with cyanide. The 2 men were obviously intending to poison elephants to remove their tusks.

The Herald, February 24, 2022; NewZimbabwe.com, February 28, 2022.⁵⁵



March 15, 2022

Lupane District, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Presumed cyanide poisoning. Near the dead elephant, a bucket containing 10 liters of a whitish substance was seized. Analyses are in progress. The elephant still had his tusks.

NewZimbabwe.com, March 20, 2022.⁵⁶



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

March 15, 2022

Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A severe wound from a snare that had

been embedded in the flesh of his left hind foot for years. The metal ring injuring the bull elephant was removed by veterinarians from The Conservation Vet, Wild Wonderful World, and African Wildlife Vets. The disabled pachyderm had been reported 2 years earlier but remained unaccounted for. The snare was recovered by Lily and Troy of Downdown 2 the Wire, who sell jewellery made from the traps to raise funds. African Wildlife Vets, March 17, 2022.⁵⁷



March 20, 2022

Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province, South Africa



Helicopter-borne operation to treat a young male elephant with a deep trap injury on his right hind leg. Jana Meyer of Hope for Wildlife's helicopter service brought Dr. Joel Alves of the Wildscapes Veterinary and Conservation Service in Hoedspruit to the scene to put the pachyderm to sleep, treat the approximately 2.5-week-old wound, clean out the maggots, and remove the snare. Too young to fend for himself, the 3 to 4-year-old's survival depends on his ability to find his family. Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, March 21, 2022; Letaba Herald, March 31, 2022.⁵⁸

NAMIBIA

February 9, 2022

Okahao, Omusati Region, Namibia

Arrest of Beteul Halweendo, Tjiveze Turinao, Katavi Uaeterera and Tjirapa Mbemutiza in possession of 6 pieces of ivory.

Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia, February 25, 2022.⁵⁹

February 15-March 5, 2022

Gobabis, Omaheke Region, Hosea Kutako International Airport and N/a'an ku sê Wildlife Sanctuary, Khomas Region, Namibia

John Grobler, an investigative journalist, was questioned at Gobabis police station with his assistant. He was accused of having filmed without authorisation with a drone the Go Hunt Namibia Safaris ranch, run by Gerrie Odendaal, who has bought 22 elephants auctioned by the government (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.25) and caught in the Kunene desert. Both were released after 3 hours. The 22 elephants and calves bought by Odendaal were transported from his ranch by truck to Hosea Kutako airport, 250 km away, and then transferred to a cargo plane.



They were exported by plane to the United Arab Emirates on Friday, March 5, and arrived there on Saturday. They will join the Al Ain Zoo in Abu Dhabi and the Sharjah Safari Park. The Moldovan company FlyPro was reportedly used as a courier. Photos taken at Windhoek airport show the appalling conditions in which the animals were transported. According to the Namibian Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, the animals are in good health, except for one female who is showing signs of weakness. In the same statement the ministry denied any responsibility for the transaction. "Once the successful bidders have ownership of the elephants, there are within their rights to utilize them in anyway provided it is done within confinement of our domestic and international laws. With the export of the 22 elephants, no international or domestic laws were violated either by the importing State or by exporting State. All relevant permits, including CITES permits, were obtained/ issued in line with article III of the Convention." Pro-elephant NGOs dispute this claim. According to them, the export of live elephants from Namibia can only be considered for countries within the elephants' natural range and for the purpose of restoring populations decimated by poaching or/ and other factors in accordance with the resolution approved during the 18th CITES Conference of the Parties in Geneva in July 2019. Only "exceptional" circumstances could possibly justify the transfer of African elephants to another continent. Prior to the approval of this resolution, "live elephants could be exported to countries recognised as appropriate and acceptable destinations." The extradition of the elephants took place on the eve of a meeting of the CITES Standing Committee in Lyon, France, at which a legal and semantic analysis was to be carried out to limit the scope of interpretation of this resolution.

The N/a'an ku sê wildlife sanctuary bought 15 elephants at auction. Since 2016, despite the support of actress Angelina Jolie, its director had been in conflict with the Ministries of Environment and Justice. He was suspected of appropriating injured or "problem" animals and under the guise of charity of breeding and trading protected species (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.129).

Namibian Sun, December 13, 2021 and February 16, 2022; Elizabeth Margaret Steyn Foundation, February 13 and March 5, 2022; The Namibian, February 14 and March 7 and 10, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, February 15 and March 6, 2022; National Geographic, February 15, 2022; New Era, February 16 and March 10, 2022; John Grobler, March 2, 2022; Informanté, March 7, 2022.⁶⁰

February 28, 2022

Onhuno, Ohangwena Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.

Arrest of 2 Angolan nationals, Shiwovanhu Tomas Kandongo, aged 33 and Armando Kondjeni, aged 61 who entered the country illegally, and 3 Namibian citizens, Correia Mateus Gayeta, aged 61, Andreas Hailaula, aged 54, and Rendle Katunda, aged 68, a traditional healer. They were looking to sell 29 sections of tusks.

Informanté, March 2, 2022.⁶¹

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

January 21, 2022

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

Seizure of 17 carved pieces of ivory in a store.
On.cc, January 21, 2021.⁶²

BEIJING AUTONOMOUS MUNICIPALITY

Early January 2022

Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China

Seizure of 54 carved ivories, statuettes, bracelets, necklaces, combs, and cutlery with ivory handles weighing a total of 5.05 kg in 7 packages from abroad.

Beijing Daily, January 11, 2022.⁶³

TIANJIN AUTONOMOUS MUNICIPALITY

February 25, 2022

Tianjin Autonomous Municipality, China



Two ivory painting scroll tips in a parcel from abroad weighing 655 grams.

Chinese Customs, February 27, 2022.⁶⁴

March 28, 2022

Tianjin Autonomous Municipality, China

Seizure in 3 packages from abroad of 8 ivory painting scroll tips. Total weight, 2.1 kg.
Chinese Customs, March 29, 2022.⁶⁵

GUANGDONG PROVINCE

Early January 2022

Maoming, Maoming Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China



Seizure of an ivory fan weighing 60 grams in an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, January 16, 2021.⁶⁶

February 2022

Guangzhou, Guangzhou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure in an incoming package of the 2 tips of a painting scroll.

Chinese Customs, February 24, 2022.⁶⁷

February 2022

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 2 pieces of ivory weighing 52 grams in a package from abroad.

Chinese Customs, March 4, 2022.⁶⁸

Early March 2022

Maonan District, Maoming Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 3 ivory necklaces concealed in a box of collagen powder in a package from abroad. Total weight, 107 grams.

Chinese Customs, March 17, 2022.⁶⁹

March 2022

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of the ivory tips of a painting scroll in a package from abroad.

Chinese Customs, March 20, 2022.⁷⁰

March 2022

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of a fan with ivory blades in a package.

Chinese Customs, March 22, 2022.⁷¹

March 2022

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 4 ivory bracelets and 3 wooden bracelets in the luggage of a passenger from abroad, hidden in a bag of melon seeds.

Chinese Customs, March 30, 2022.⁷²

HUBEI PROVINCE

March 9, 2022

Wuhan, Hubei Province, China

Seizure of an ivory cigarette holder weighing 11.5 grams in a package from abroad. Chinese Customs, March 14, 2022.⁷³

March 14, 2022

Wuhan, Hubei Province, China

A scroll with ivory tips weighing 42.2 grams in incoming mail. Chinese Customs, March 17, 2022.⁷⁴

JIANGSU PROVINCE

March 15, 2022

Nanjing Lukou International Airport, Jiangsu Province, China

Two ivory bracelets in the luggage of passengers from abroad. Total weight: 104.97 grams. Chinese Customs, March 17, 2022.⁷⁵

March 2022

Suzhou, Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizure in a parcel from abroad of a painting scroll with ivory tips. Total weight: 504 grams. Chinese Customs, April 12, 2022.⁷⁶

SHANDONG PROVINCE

Early January 2022

Jimo, Shandong Province, China

Seizure in an incoming parcel of 4 carved ivories including 3 necklaces concealed in sports shoes. Total weight, 148.7 grams. Chinese Customs, January 13, 2022.⁷⁷



March 2022

Qingdao Port, Qingdao Prefecture, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 19 carved ivories including painting scroll tips in a batch of furniture and second-hand goods from abroad. Chinese Customs, March 22, 2022.⁷⁸

SICHUAN PROVINCE

January 11, 2022

Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Seizure in an inbound parcel of carved ivory weighing 75 grams. Chinese Customs, January 11, 2022.⁷⁹

January 14, 2022

Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China



Wang (not her real name) was fined 3,640 US\$ and ordered to print 5,000 leaflets on wildlife protection at her own expense and to distribute and display them in Hejiang County. She also had to publish a letter of apology in a daily newspaper. In February 2019, Wang fraudulently bought 2 bracelets, 4 pairs of earrings, and 2 ivory Buddha pendants and sought to resell them for a profit on Taobao. South Sichuan Net, January 19, 2022.⁸⁰

February 25, 2022

Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Seizure of a decorative painting with suspected ivory inlays in an incoming parcel. China Customs, February 26, 2022.⁸¹

YUNNAN PROVINCE

Early January 2022

Mengla, Mengla Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China

Two ivory bracelets in an incoming package, 30 grams. Chinese Customs, January 18, 2022.⁸²

ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

Early January 2022

Wenzhou, Wenzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of 12 ivory painting scroll tips in a package declared to contain a "tea box." Chinese Customs, January 13, 2022.⁸³

January 2022

Qianjiang, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure in 7 incoming parcels of 20 ivory painting scroll tips (571 grams) and one ivory bracelet (71.4 grams). Hangzhou Daily, February 17, 2022; China Customs, February 18, 2022.⁸⁴

February 2022

Ningbo-Zhoushan Port, Zhejiang Province, China

The analysis of the 52 keys of a piano that arrived at the Meishan terminal confirms that they are made of ivory. Total weight: 242.93 grams. Chinese Customs, March 4, 2022.⁸⁵

March 2022

Qianjiang, Hangzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China

Eleven painting scroll tips in a package from abroad weighing 172.5 grams. Chinese Customs, April 7, 2022.⁸⁶

TAIWAN

February 19, 2022

Tainan, Taiwan

Seizure in a private home of 3 tusks. The owner said he was unaware of the regulations and was trying to auction them via the Internet. He was sentenced to 6 months in prison with a 2-year probationary period and a fine of 50,000 New Taiwan dollars (1,796 US\$). United Online, May 20, 2022.⁸⁷



SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 28, 2022

Phnom Penh Autonomous Municipality, Cambodia

The Phnom Penh Court of Appeal confirms the guilt of Khan Sinith, General Manager of Reho Both Cambodia Co in the attempted fraudulent importation into Cambodia of 3,008 kg of raw ivory from Mombasa, Kenya in May 2004 (see "On the Trail" n°5 p.99, n°12 p.91 and n°17 p.99). However, Sinith was sentenced to 3 years in jail but the term of his sentence will only be for a year and the rest will be suspended. The court also ordered him to pay 90 million riels (about 22,500 US\$) as a fine to be put toward the State's budget.

The Phnom Penh Post, February 8, 2022; Khmer Times, March 1, 2022.⁸⁸



INDONESIA

February 15, 2022

Kampung Pinang, Mandailing Natal Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



An female elephant found dead on the side of the road near Pedu Dam. Found by farmers who saw blood in her faeces, the female may have eaten plants contaminated with an herbicide. New Straits Times, February 15, 2022.⁸⁹

MALAYSIA

January 31, 2022

Kampung Padang Tapong, State of Terengganu, Malaysia

He died chained to a tree before he could regain his freedom. The 15-year-old elephant had come too close to the village. The 2-tonne bull was captured for release further away, but couldn't stand the shackles.

New Straits Times (with Bernama), February 2022.⁹⁰

Early March 2022

Ulu Tungku, State of Sabah, Malaysia

A female pygmy elephant, approximately 25 years old, is found dead on a palm oil farm. The elephant's death is attributed to cadmium poisoning. A study revealed heavy metal pollution around the plantations. Three pygmy elephants in Borneo already succumbed to cadmium poisoning by the end of 2021. The Star, March 10 and 11, 2022.⁹¹



SINGAPORE

March 2022

Singapore

The 40-foot container came from Apapa, Nigeria. It was declared to contain peanuts. It was in transit to Viet Nam. Also inside was 3,500 kg of raw ivory. Dao Thi Boi, the director of VNSG Trading and Song Hong Trading & Logistics, a Vietnamese expatriate in Singapore, is charged with complicity with someone called Su Thein, the Vietnamese shipper in Apapa. Dao Thi Boi is accused of not taking all reasonable precautions or exercise all due diligence to avoid committing the offenses.

Today, March 23, 2022.⁹²

THAILAND

January 10, 2022

Kaeng Krachan National Park, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

A 60-year-old elephant succumbed to severe gunshot wounds. Found near the park's Ka Rang 3 tank, he was shot 20 times in the body and head. The wounds resulted in general sepsis. "Normally, elephants will sleep by leaning on a tree and lie on their right side to avoid their weight pressing against the heart. But this elephant didn't, and fell into a coma which culminated in his death," said veterinarian Patarapol Maneeorn, chief wildlife veterinarian of the Department of National Parks (DNP).

Hundreds of elephant traps have been removed near Phu Luang Nature Reserve in Loei and the Khao Phu Luang no-hunting zone. In Pak Thong Chai and Wang Nam Khiao districts of Nakhon Ratchasima, rangers seized 36 sling traps, 3 rope traps, and 8 snap traps. Bangkok Post, January 23, 2022.⁹³

January 14, 2022

Phu Luang Wildlife Sanctuary, Loei Province, Thailand



Niad Butata and his team, in charge of the protection of the Phu Ho forest, discovered and removed 70 elephant traps. A tree had been cut with a chainsaw into slices the size of an elephant's foot. The circles had nails sticking out and were placed around a swamp. This hellish method was designed to kill elephants slowly or wound them, which makes them easier to poach. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, January 22, 2022.⁹⁴



February 2022

Bahoi, Saba Yoi District, Songkhla Province, Thailand. Border with Malaysia.

The Royal Thai Police, based on information from villagers who had heard elephants howling in the mountains earlier this year, discovered the jaws, bones, rib cage and anatomical remains of an elephant after several hours of walking. The skull was pierced by a bullet, which proves poaching. The 2 tusks are missing. Marks of a bivouac were found on site and a half-cut bamboo grove proves the presence of a family of elephants in the area. Mgronline.com, February 26, 2022; Dailynews, March 2, 2022; The Thaiger, March 3, 2022.⁹⁵

VIET NAM

February 2022

Phu Quoc Island, Kien Giang Province, Viet Nam

The store had been identified in 2019 but Covid-19 restrictions prevented investigators from inspecting it. Also, the disappearance of tourists led to its temporary closure. But this time, the investigators discovered 27 ivory bracelets on the spot. They are destined for destruction. Fine of 217 million dong (9,475 US\$). ENV, April 18, 2022.⁹⁶

February 18, 2022

Dong Thai and Dong Hoa, Kien Giang Province, Viet Nam



Seizure from 2 stores of 1.4 kg of carved ivory items. The cumulative amount of fines imposed on the 2 traders is close to 1 billion dong (44,190 US\$). Ho Chi Minh City Law Journal, February 18, 2022.⁹⁷

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

January 18, 2022

Pettah, Thiruvananthapuram District, State of Kerala, India

Aji Bright is back in the news. Suspected of poaching in the forests of Idamalayar, Bright had lodged a complaint against 3 forest officers who allegedly molested him during interrogation. The local jail had refused to admit him to the remand prison and referred him to a hospital. The Kerala High Court had stayed the investigation in April 2018. Bright was again arrested by the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) in Chennai. New evidence is said to prove his involvement in poaching elephants in Coimbatore district in 2011-2012. Aji Bright's family is dismissing these rumours. According to them, this surprise arrest is part of a conspiracy to definitively stop the ongoing investigation into the torture of which Aji Bright was allegedly a victim (see "On the Trail" n°12 p.93, n°19, p.110 and n°21 p.95). Mathrubhumi, January 18, 2022; Kaumudi, January 19, 2022.⁹⁸

Night of January 21 to 22, 2022

Gowdahalli, Chamrajnagar District, State of Karnataka, India



An elephant died of electrocution on the edge of a farm. Lokesh Murthy and his team arrived at the scene. They filed a report and the farmers in the area held a flash protest next to the body. They claimed that the elephant was electrocuted by a fallen public electric wire. Deccan Herald, January 22, 2022.⁹⁹



January 23, 2022

Devadhanapatti, Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

A pair of tusks measuring 52 cm long were seized by the staff of the Forest Department in Kodaikanal. Nine people were arrested while trying to sell them to the police posing as potential buyers: A. Prakash, aged 29, R. Balamurugan, aged 35, A. Packiyarasu, aged 30, K. Muthaiah, aged 57, M. Sarathkumar, aged 30 from Periyakulam in Theni District, A. Vijayakumar, aged 60 from Unjampatti of the same district, C. Chinnaraj, aged 29, V. Sivakumar, aged 42, and A. Abdulla, aged 34, all from Usilampatti in Madurai District. The small tusks belonging to a juvenile elephant were sent to the Advanced Institute of Wildlife Conservation (AIWC) in Chennai for analysis. As the tusks have changed hands, the investigation is expected to determine their origin. The Hindu, January 23, 2022; The Times of India, January 23, 2022.¹⁰⁰

January 23, 2022

Devarayaneri, Tiruchirappalli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 5 ivories carved in the manner of tiger claws. Two people, Arunpandi and Soundararajan, were arrested on the outskirts of the city. The Hindu, January 23, 2022.¹⁰¹

January 28, 2022

Sulagodu, Mysuru District, State of Karnataka, India



Farmers opened fire on a family of elephants who had strayed too far from the forest edge of the Anechowkuru Reserve, near Nagarahole National Park. The result: a female elephant in her 20s died in a field.

Deccan Herald, January 28, 2022.¹⁰²

February 2022

State of Tamil Nadu, India

Elephants are also held captive for organized begging. 32 elephants are currently held by individuals and 31 by temples. At least 19 of these, mostly in private homes, did not have valid ownership certificates and were being abused. The Tamil Nadu Forest Department already has 64 captive elephants in its 5 camps. The agency has asked its counterparts in Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, and Uttarakhand to take in some of them.

The New Indian Express, February 20, 2022.¹⁰³

February 2 and 5, 2022

Anchetty Forest, Arimuthanapalli and Ezhumanaidoddi, Krishnagiri District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Two men arrested for killing a tusker. V. Muthu, aged 35, and C. Kaliyappan, aged 28, said they went hunting for rabbits on the night of January 30. They "met" the elephant, about 18 years old, who allegedly chased them. Kaliyappan shot him in the head. A homemade weapon and explosives were seized. The 2 men were taken into custody, but an accomplice is at large. Two tusks, each weighing 3 kg, have been secured after the autopsy of the carcass.

The New Indian Express, February 6, 2022.¹⁰⁴

February 8 and 15, 2022

Balikiari Forest Reserve, Cuttack District, State of Odisha, India

The remains of an elephant were exhumed from the Narasinghpur forest. Bones will be used to determine the sex of the animal. The elephant was reportedly poached and buried 2 months earlier. Seasoned smugglers have been questioned by the police: Biranchi Dehuri, aged 40, Praful Singh, aged 55, Sameer Mahalik, aged 39, Rajiv Lochan Nayak, aged 23, Jitendra Dehuri, aged 29, Bimal Nayak, age 29, Laxmidhar Singh, aged 50, and Harihar Mallick, aged 58. Government officials are also allegedly involved in the case. Activists staged a demonstration in Bhubaneswar to protest against the slow pace and secrecy of investigations into elephant poaching in the State.

Pragativadi, February 8, 2022; Odisha TV, February 15, 2022.¹⁰⁵

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 12, 2022

Varappalayam, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



He was on his way out after visiting the banana plantation at night and came across a large supercharged cable.

The Hindu, February 12, 2022; The New Indian Express, February 18, 2022.¹⁰⁶

February 16, 2022

Bommasandra, Bengaluru-Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

Six people are caught red-handed attempting to sell ivory in a commercial area. Two tusks weighing 14.24 kg, allegedly from the forests around Denkanikottai in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu, were seized from them. Harish, Rafiq, Mani, Manikantan, Thyagaraju and Theriyanna, all 30 years old and residents of Hosur, were arrested. Aima Media, February 18, 2022; Deccan Herald, March 9, 2022.¹⁰⁷

February 27, 2022

Between Patung and Kalanda, Kendujhar District, State of Odisha, India

Two ivory smugglers were arrested on the road. Ramakanta Pradhan, aged 38, and Anama Munda, aged 35, were in possession of 2 suspected elephant calf tusks weighing 5.662 kg. A third thief, suspected of being the main actor of this trade, is wanted.

New Indian Express, February 28, 2022.¹⁰⁸

Night of March 4 to 5, 2022

Alinagar Area, Kokrajhar District, State of Assam, India

Two elephant tusks and a rifle are seized. Six people were arrested overnight in the Raimona National Park area.

Northeast Now, March 5, 2022; The Sentinel, March 6, 2022.¹⁰⁹

Night of March 7 to 8, 2022

Madhapur, Angul District, State of Odisha, India

A father, his son, and others gather in front of the remains of an elephant who died from electrocution. What goes on in a child's mind when he sees the corpse? In Madhapur, electric fencing is a common way to get rid of elephants.

The New Indian Express, March 9, 2022.¹¹⁰



March 8, 2022

Bagdogra, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India. India-Nepal border

Arrest of 2 individuals and seizure of a piece of ivory weighing 136 grams by forest guards and elements of 41st SSB Battalion in coordination with WCCB headquarters. The town of Bagdogra is located approximately 15 km from the Nepalese border. WCCB, March 9, 2022.¹¹¹

March 12, 2022

Belbani, Bankura District, State of West Bengal, India



He didn't even have time to close his eyes. Many locals are offended, but the use of electrocution among farmers who have settled in the "Jungle Mahal" is common.

The Telegraph India, March 13, 2022.¹¹²

March 13, 2022

Madurai, Madurai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Arrest of an individual in possession of 14 ivory figurines and objects including statuettes of female deities and elephants, a divine chariot, and small cups.

WCCB, March 15, 2022.¹¹³

March 13, 2022

Jaipur, Jaipur District, State of Rajasthan, India

Three traffickers are arrested, one of them a dirty cop. Najuddin Khan, a sub-inspector with the Uttar Pradesh police, Nadir Ali, alias Shahrukh, and Gulam Khan were intercepted in an SUV with 35 pieces of ivory and sections of tusks weighing a total of 30 kg, 165 g of powdered ivory, a revolver loaded with 6 rounds of ammunition, and 150,000 rupees (1,995 US\$) in cash. This is one of the largest ivory seizures in the district in recent years. The police officer was fired.

WCCB, March 13, 2022; The Times of India, March 14, 2022; Hindustan Times, April 21, 2022.¹¹⁴



March 18, 2022

Tiruppur, Tiruppur District, State of Tamil Nadu, India.

A trio on a motorcycle is arrested with 4 sections of tusks that they wanted to sell for 8 million rupees (106,380 US\$). V. Veerappan, aged 63, P. Murugan, aged 45, both from Velliankadu, and M. Avinashiyappan, aged 37 from Avinashi, were incarcerated. Investigation revealed that Veerappan was riddled with debts and was acting as a middleman for a 10 percent commission. WCCB, March 19, 2022; The Times of India, March 20 and 21, 2022.¹¹⁵

March 18 and 20, 2022

Banashankari, Bengaluru Urban District; Veerapura, Hassan District, State of Karnataka, India



Chandre Gowda, aged 46 from Hassan, Praveen Guled, aged 24, and Somalingappa Kodad, aged 41 from Haveri, were caught while awaiting a customer for the 2 tusks of an approximately 25-year-old male elephant who had been electrocuted in Veerapura. The carcass was exhumed and samples were taken to confirm that the tusks seized were from this animal. The police are looking for the owner of the excavator used to bury him on the Gowda farm. Bangalore Mirror, March 20, 2022; The Times of India, March 20, 2022; The Hindu, March 21, 2022.¹¹⁶

March 22, 2022

Jalpaiguri, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India

Six trucks are intercepted on the Teesta Bridge. They were carrying 7 elephants. The drivers and the mahouts, 18 in all, were questioned by the police. The convoy was coming from Arunachal Pradesh and was heading towards Gujarat, 3,300 km apart. Before the arrival of the police, the trucks were blocked by a spontaneous gathering of the population. Trunks were sticking out of the trailers. The 5 male elephants, the female elephant, and the male elephant calf were examined by veterinarians. Smuggling is suspected, possibly from Nepal.

Trafficking of domestic elephants between Nepal and India, see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 50 and n°34 p. 50. 50 and n°34 p. 44. (attention annotation en français)

Eisamay, March 22, 2022; The Telegraph India, March 23, 2022.¹¹⁷

March 27, 2022

Thimmanthotti, Krishnagiri District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Death of a 35-year-old female elephant in the Jawalagiri forest. The homemade rifle of D. Marappan, aged 50, who confessed to shooting her, was seized. The farmer claimed that the elephant had tried to attack one of his cows.

DT Next, March 28, 2022; The Times Bureau, March 29, 2022.¹¹⁸

March 28, 2022

Kathachema, Tinsukia District, State of Assam, India



Wildlife Trust India's veterinarian confirms that the elephant was electrocuted. The growing instances of conflict between humans and elephants have been attributed by experts to shrinking forest cover and encroachment on elephant corridors, which have forced the pachyderms to move out from their ecological space and stray into places of human settlements.

The Times of India, March 30, 2022.¹¹⁹

End of March 2022

Boluvampatty, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



Starting on Tuesday, March 22, 3 veterinarians and assistants tried to save an 8 to 10-year-old female elephant who bit into a fruit filled with explosives on a walking path. The "avittukai" are left in the wild to kill wild animals and trade their meat. Sukumar, the chief veterinarian, also describes the ordeal of the torture victim: "We suspect the animal might have been injured in a fight with a tusker or bitten an avittukai (country bomb). The injury might have occurred 3 weeks ago and since then the animal could not chew grass or drink water, which has weakened her. We have so far given more than 30 bottles of glucose. However, she has not since for the last 21 days, she did not have food and water. She is in a critical condition." She died on Friday, March 25.

The Hindu, March 24, 2022; The New Indian Express, March 24, 2022; The Times of India, March 25, 2022.¹²⁰

NEPAL

March 26, 2022

Pakahamainpur, Parsa District, Madhesh Province, Nepal. India-Nepal border.

Three people caught with 2 elephants they were smuggling into India from Sauraha, a tourist destination near Chitwan National Park where about 100 elephants are exploited for photo safaris. Smuggler Apharoj Alam, aged 35, elephant caretaker Budiram Mahato, aged 60, and Raju Kumal, aged 40, were arrested for trafficking captive elephants. It is mainly the old and sick ones that are taken to India, where they are used for temple processions, wedding parties, and other events.

Trafficking of domestic elephants between India and Nepal, see "On the Trail" n°32 p.50 and n°34 p.44. The Kathmandu Post, March 29, 2022.¹²¹

SRI LANKA

Early January 2022

Ampara, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

Two men from Ransegoda and Kengalla were arrested in possession of 3 "Gaja Muthu" or "Gajamukta", elephant ivory beads weighing over 150 grams. They are estimated to be worth more than 50 million rupees (250,000 US\$). The bull elephants were reportedly shot at the Yala, Kumana, and Udawalawa Reserves.



Gaja Muthu, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 101, n°19 p. 112, n°22 p. 100, n°23 p. 134, n°24 p. 79 and n°32 p. 51. Daily Mirror, January 7, 2022.¹²²

January 6, 2022

Yala National Park, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

A wild elephant frequenting the Situlpawwa road was shot and killed. The veterinarian of the Udawalawa elephant transit center, Dr. Ananda Dharmakeerthi, who conducted the post-mortem examination, said the pachyderm was shot 3 times and had eaten corn shortly before his death. The police have taken into custody a civil security agent who owns a corn-growing field nearby. He was the one who shot the elephant with a T56 rifle. Daily Mirror, January 7 and 8, 2022.¹²³

January 2022

Galporuyaya, Uva Province, Sri Lanka

The body of a baby elephant was found in Badulla district, about 100 meters from an electric fence built to protect a corn plantation. Local residents found suspicious evidence: an overturned elephant fence was found and a bullet fragment plus a piece of cloth smelling of gunpowder were found at the scene.

News 1st, January 25, 2022.¹²⁴

January 2022

Karadiyanaru, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

Two men were arrested with priceless "elephant beads" or "Gaja Muthu." The suspects, aged 29 and 52 live in the Mahaoya area, are likely poachers in the reserve.

"Gaja Muthu," see also above, early January in Ampara.

News 1st, January 29, 2022.¹²⁵

January 2022

Udawalawe National Park, Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces, Sri Lanka

It's a new mystery in the troubled world of Sri Lanka's elephants between forced domesticity, conflicts with farmers, and poaching for ivory and "Gaja Muthu" beads. "Walawe Kota," one of the country's 2 dwarf elephants, has not been seen for over a year in Uda Walawe National Park, Wetahirakanda Corridor, or Lunugamwehere Park where he had been sighted since 2013. The latest trap camera photos show scars on the back of "Walawe Kota" that may have been caused by rifle bullets. In 2018, a female dwarf elephant, born like "Walawe Kota" from a genetic anomaly, was spotted.



News 1st, January 23, 2022.¹²⁶

January-February 2022

Sri Lanka

The investigation into the death of His Majesty Revatha in March 2021 continues (see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 52). His tusks have been handed over to the Museum of Natural History in Colombo. The University of Moratuwa is in charge of assessing the murderous fence.



Three more elephants have been electrocuted in Tirappane and Bakamuna since January 1, 2022. One of the suspects was released on bail of 200,000 rupees (1,000 US\$) in contradiction with the Provisions of the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance. Anyone can buy batteries at hardware stores for 20,000 rupees. Their power is not regulated. Coupled with metal cables, they can strike all wild animals, domestic animals, men, women, and children.

Daily News, January 29, 2022; Daily FT, February 10, 2022.¹²⁷

February 11, 2022

Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka

A Sri Lankan tour guide has been fined 200,000 rupees (2,600 US\$) for animal cruelty. Shashika Gimhan Dhananjaya Rajasinghe had filmed himself driving his car and stalking a panicked elephant. He posted the video on TikTok. His social media accounts have been deleted, but the video continues to be shared.



AFP, February 11, 2022.¹²⁸

February 16, 2022
Othiyamalai, Northern Province, Sri Lanka



A woman, the owner of a farm, was arrested. She is accused of causing the electrocution of an elephant.

NewsWire, February 17, 2022.¹²⁹

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

End of January 2022

Vöcklabruck District, Upper Austria State, Austria

Seizure of 3 kg of carved ivory items of uncertain origin valued at 12.000 € (13,600 US\$) from a 62-year-old "pensioner." The man was trading ivory via the Internet and claimed not to be aware of European regulations.

Federal Ministry of Finance, February 14, 2022; salzi.at, February 14, 2022.¹³⁰

SPAIN

Early February 2022

Alicante, Province of Alicante, Valencian Community, Spain

Bad taste is lethal. Four African elephant feet have been seized. The rich owner aged 67, of the limbs turned into small stools claims that it was a gift he wanted to get rid of. A member of his family put them on sale on the Internet for 600 € (670 US\$).

El Periódico de España, February 2, 2022.¹³¹



What could be more chic than an elephant leg to sit on?

ITALY

March 18, 2022

Parma, Province of Parma, Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy

In the stands of the Mercanteinfiera exhibition, the carabinieri of Modena, Bologna, Rome, and Parma seized a raw ivory tusk, a religious scepter selling for 40,000 €, a jester's marotte selling for 15,000 €, an ivory comb selling for 4,000 €, a carved tusk selling for 15,000 €, and 167 other carved ivory items including crucifixes selling for between 100 and 6,000 €. The value of all the objects is 200,000 € (224,320 US\$).

Ambient&Ambienti, March 21, 2022; Arma dei Carabinieri, March 21, 2022; Gazzetta di Modena, March 21, 2022; Il Resto di Carlino, March 21, 2022.¹³²

March 27, 2022

Piazzola sul Brenta, Province of Padua, Region of Veneto, Italy

Seizure at a famous antique fair of 24 carved ivories including crucifixes, statuettes, a necklace, cameos, and a fan, all being sold without proof of their legal origin. Total value: 20,000 € (22,430 US\$).

Il Gazzettino, April 1, 2022.¹³³

ELEPHANTS, RHINOS / HIPPOS / WALRUSES / SPERM WHALES

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

March 3, 2022

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Sentence of Cosmus Ziwande for transporting and possessing raw ivory and hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) teeth to a fine of 10,000 rand (660 US\$) suspended for 5 years (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.58). The individual is already serving a 7-year prison sentence for tampering with essential infrastructure in Clanwilliam in July 2021. SAPS, March 4, 2022.¹

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

September 8, 2021 and January 24, 2022

San Diego, State of California, United States of America

Chess sets, carved tusks, statuettes... Stephen Shu Wang, aged 53, was selling ivory stored in his garage in Carmel Valley via the Internet. Undercover agents from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife twice bought ivory from him before seizing 200 carved pieces of ivory at his home, as well as walrus tusks (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) and hippopotamus teeth (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II).

The trafficker was charged with 15 counts. The seizure of his entire collection, valued at more than 100,000 US\$, and the requirement to perform 100 hours of volunteer work with a non-profit animal conservation organization kept him out of jail.

Times of San Diego, September 8, 2021; NBC 7 San Diego, January 27, 2022.²

ASIA

CHINA

March 3, 2022

Tianhe District, Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Sentence of Su (not his real name) to 6 years in prison and a fine of 50,000 yuan (7,920 US\$) for knowingly fraudulently purchasing 4 carved ivory items worth 18,360 US\$ and a rhino horn worth 160,000 US\$ from a stall in the flower and bird market between 2017 and 2019. He said he wanted to use them for medical purposes. The sellers are being prosecuted separately.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, March 4, 2022.³

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

March 19, 2022

Derby Unitary Authority, England, United Kingdom



Ngie Law was sentenced to 2 years in prison suspended for 2 years and the confiscation of 61,266 £ (82,060 US\$) worth of cash and assets.

The money that is seized under POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act) is split between the police and the government and is often used to fund community projects. Ngie Law's Internet trafficking covered newly manufactured elephant, walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) and hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) ivory (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.60).

The ivory will now mostly be distributed to other forces, including the National Wildlife Crime Unit trainer, Border Force CITES Team, and the Museum of Scotland for training purposes. The remaining quantity will be destroyed to prevent it from going back into the trade.

Derbyshire Police, April 22, 2022.⁴

March 28, 2022

Londonderry, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom



A former cannabis dealer and repentant alcoholic is fined 500 £ (670 US\$). He is accused of trafficking in elephant and sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) ivory.

He says he inherited his father's collection and his passion for antiques. He said that in ancient times everything contained ivory, that if he had a sperm whale tooth in his house, it was because the English had killed thousands of sperm whales in the last centuries. There was ivory everywhere, he insists, in glove stretchers, cocktail holders, teapots. "I had bought bovine bone for arts and crafts. I didn't know it was ivory." "I even reminded the judge that during the terror attack in London didn't a hero use a narwhal tusk to fight off a man with 2 knives but he wasn't interested." "I'll be honest on Monday night I nearly opened a bottle of brandy."

The Irish News, October 18, 2021; Sunday World, April 2, 2022.⁵

RHINOCEROSSES



Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*). Photo Karoconniff

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°35

Black market horn quotation from media or official sources
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of 1kg of raw horn

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	South Africa	7400	14 (2022)

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

March 23, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Arrest of 2 suspects in possession of 3 pieces of suspected rhino horn.

Big Life Foundation, March 23, 2022.¹

MOZAMBIQUE

REPEATED OFFENSE

January 18, 2022

Maputo, Maputo Province, Mozambique



Admiro Ananias Salvador Chauque was sentenced to 30 years in prison. He is said to be a repeat offender and leader of a gang of rhino poachers in the Magude and Massingir districts and in the Kruger Park.

Carta de Moçambique, January 19, 2022; Club of Mozambique (with Lusa), January 19, 2022.²

ZIMBABWE

Early January 2022

Savé Valley Conservancy, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Arrest of a man armed with a large gun and an axe. He was chased by the dog squad of the 25,000-km² private game reserve, one of the largest in southern Africa. Two accomplices who were waiting for him in a getaway car were later arrested. The reserve's anti-poaching squad is reinforced by 11 Belgian Malinois shepherds.

Fauna and Flora Zimbabwe, January 6, 2022; Zim Morning Post, May 18, 2022.³

February 2022

Savé Valley Conservancy, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Fatal poaching of a pregnant female rhino. One horn was cut off by the poachers. Zim Morning Post, May 18, 2022.⁴



February 7, 2022

Matobo District, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

A black rhino died. Both horns were amputated. A metal detector recovered as evidence a bullet lodged in the skull and 2 sensors of unknown origin to record the speed of movement, posture of the animal, and its location. A manhunt is underway. The Sunday Mail, February 10, 2022.⁵

February 20, 2022

Bikita, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

A white rhino died. His body was found in a pit, covered with a black tarp and branches. The body has 2 large calibre bullet holes in the shoulder. The 2 horns were missing.

The Herald, February 24, 2022.⁶

End of March 2022

Makotami, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

Discovery of a dead rhino in Matobo National Park. Poisoning is suspected. The poachers did not have time to amputate the horns. EnviroPress Zimbabwe, March 31, 2022; Fauna and Flora Zimbabwe, March 31, 2022.⁷



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early January 2022

Barberton Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Rescue of a very young orphan whose 2 small horns were not amputated by the poachers who killed and dehorned his mother. The survivor was handed over to the Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary. The Aspinall Foundation, January 8, 2022.⁸



January 24, 2022

Marataba Conservation Camps, Limpopo Province, South Africa

On September 24, 2016, the opening day of the 17th CITES plenary meeting in Johannesburg, 6 rhinos were attacked by a gang in a northwestern reserve. Only Seha, a 12-year-old male, survived, but in very bad condition. The tearing off of his 2 horns had opened a wound measuring 49 by 26 cm. For 5 years, Seha ("have mercy on us" in Zulu) was cared for and pampered, and his face was even reconstructed. A shepherd was assigned to him. He accompanied him on all his outings, guided him, and reported on how he was doing. "He had walked over 2 km, he has rested in the deep bush, he has drunk, he looked peaceful." In the year 2018, he was introduced to 2 females and in 2019 a cub was born. Seha was, before the hurricane of cruelty that fell on him and his companions in 2016, remarkable for his stature and profile. Dr. Johan Marais, director of Saving the Survivors, wanted his gene pool to be passed on. According to Saving the Survivors, rhinos rescued from poaching should be respected despite their infirmities and they should still contribute to the survival of the species. At the end of January, Seha left his convalescent paddock and was transferred to a reserve in the Waterberg Mountains, far from the cities and bustling countryside. He has every chance of living there until the natural end of his life.

Saving the Survivors, January 21 and 25, 2022.⁹



January 28, 2022

Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa

7,800 hectares. 1,800 and some white rhinos. Yet John Hume says he is on the verge of ruin. His Buffalo Dream Ranch is turning into a nightmare because of the drop in value of live rhinos, the continuing closure of the international horn trade and the skyrocketing costs of caretaking and feeding.

John Hume has suffered a setback in court. "I want my horns back" he said in August 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.46). He was referring to the 181 horns [initially the SAPS in their statement mentioned 167 horns] seized by the Hawks from Petrus Steyn and Clive Melville on April 13, 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°25 p.76). The Pretoria High Court did not grant his application. The judgment sheds some new light on this utterly incredible and surreal case. On April 11, 2019, Hawks Colonel Johannes Smit received information that 3 individuals who had applied for permits to purchase horns from John Hume and transport them would be picking them up the following day from the "Centurion" vault. The confidential information claims that a number of horns could be sold on the black market. An undercover operation was mounted on the morning of April 12 and 3 individuals were observed entering the vault to complete the formalities. The first left without any horn. The second was a South African citizen of Chinese origin, he was in possession of a transport permit for 2 horns to the Western Cape. After the horns were handed over, he left the scene. The third individual was Steyn. He took delivery of 181 horns and left the scene. Melville joined him in a storage facility and they both left the next day for North West Province where they were arrested even though the transport permit they held was only for Gauteng Province. The 181 horns were then seized. The judge is puzzled by Hume's version of events: "It is astounding that a self-professed businessman would voluntarily release valuable assets, such as rhino horns, from his control and custody, entrust them to a "potential buyer" he has never personally met for inspection in the hope that the potential buyer becomes a buyer of the 181 horns at a reasonable price to be agreed. It defies logic why the potential buyer could not inspect the horns at the Centurion vault. This would firstly have obviated the need for a transport permit, and secondly would have eliminated the risk of loss of valuable rhino horns. It is implausible that any person, let alone a self-professed businessman, would release from his control and custody not a few but all 181 horns, each valued at around 60,000 rand (4,080 US\$) to a potential buyer without any assurance that the potential buyer intended buying one of them, let alone 181."

The Hawks' lawyers agree. According to them, Rossouw, the alleged buyer, had absolutely no intention of taking possession of John Hume's 181 horns. If he accepted that the transport permit be in his name, it was in exchange for a fee. In fact, Rossouw and Hume were complicit in facilitating an illegal transaction of 181 horns, the lawyers said. According to them, the issue of the return of the horns to John Hume should be examined not by a civil court but by a criminal court.

Relying on case law regarding seizures and their return, the judge effectively held that pending the judgment of a criminal court, the Hawks are not only entitled, but are obliged to retain the 181 horns.

High Court of South Africa, Gauteng Division, January 28, 2022; Sunday World, February 6, 2022.

January 31, 2022

OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Seizure in the luggage of a Malayan passenger about to fly to Kuala Lumpur on a Qatar Airways plane of 11 rhino horns wrapped in aluminium foil and hidden under boxes of chocolate candy and green tea.

SAPS, February 1, 2022; Save the Beasts, February 1, 2022.¹¹

February 2022

South Africa

Two Saving the Survivors vets rushed by helicopter to a game reserve where 4 rhinos had been poached and dehorned overnight. Fearing that the killers were still in the area, the reserve management wanted the remaining rhinos dehorned as a precaution. "Trimming the horns of rhino is never something we relish doing, but in certain cases it is the most immediate and effective way to protect individual rhinos."

Council of Contributors, March 22 and April 3, 2022; Saving the Survivors, March 24 and April 1, 2022.¹²



February 8, 2022
Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

His drive-off in 2018 was reported in "On the Trail" n°23 p.103. The policeman had in his car 2 freshly cut horns and a firearm. He has just been sentenced to 10 years in prison. SAPS, February 9, 2022.¹³



February 16, 2022
Ekurhuleni, Gauteng Province, South Africa

The arrest in September 2021 of Stephanus Peter Peters and Lina Zhang for attempting to export 30 horns to Malaysia in May 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.52) put investigators on the trail of a 49-year-old woman. At her home, they discovered 29 horns weighing 51.94 kg and valued at 6 million rand (384,400 US\$ or 7,400 US\$/kg). The horns, wrapped in aluminium foil, were stored in her garage and ready to be shipped. News24, February 17, 2022.¹⁴



February 19, 2022
Northern Cape Province, South Africa

The little orphan was found cuddled up to her mother who had been shot and dehorned. Her ordeal lasted at least 3 days. Somehow she was lucky: lions could have eaten her. She is now in the care of the Wild Hearts Wildlife Rehab Centre. Wild Hearts Wildlife Rehab Centre, February 21, 2022.¹⁵

February 24, 2022
Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Michael Chauke and Americo Mathonsi were caught in the act of poaching in the Satara section of Kruger Park in May 2019. Next to them were 2 rhinos in agony. They have been sentenced to 23 years in prison for breaking and entering a national park, killing a protected species, and possessing a weapon without a license. SAPS, February 25, 2022; Daily Dispatch, February 26, 2022.¹⁶



March 2022
KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Bloodbath in the province. Between January 1 and April 4, 75 rhinos were fatally poached and dehorned, almost all of them in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. On the condition of anonymity, the guards don't mince their words. "We are in the same boat as Kruger." "There are not enough boots on the ground." "Poachers must be getting inside information from corrupt staff." "I would not be surprised if some of the poachers are coming straight through the gates using the 'drop and shoot' method seen in Kruger." Between Hluhluwe-iMfolozi and Kruger, there are only 650 km, a short trip in a Mercedes or BMW. The mafia understood that in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi, it was self-service and that in Kruger it was becoming more and more difficult due to the shortage of rhinos and the number of rangers. Helping Rhinos, March 23, 2022; Daily Maverick, April 5, 2022.¹⁷

March 2022
South Africa



Saving the Survivors is at the bedside of a white rhino who had his nasal horn cut off alive by poachers. The wound has been treated and covered with a fiberglass bandage secured with orthopaedic screws to prevent oxpeckers from delaying the healing process. Saving the Survivors, April 5, 2022.¹⁸

March 1, 2022
Tembisa, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Ping Wu, age 49, is sentenced to 5 years in prison for money laundering. She is part of a syndicate of rhino horn traffickers in Gauteng. After exploring all paths, on July 23, 2019 the Hawks arrested Ping Wu at the Emperors Palace Casino in Kempton Park. She was carrying large sums of cash from a recent "deal" of horns. She was denied bail. Kempton Park is a major wildlife trafficking site, see "On the Trail" n°27 p.73, n°28 p.102, n°31 p.46 and n°32 p.12. SAPS, March 2, 2022; Save the Beasts, March 2, 2022.¹⁹



March 11, 2022
Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Sentence of Sibusiso Mahlaule and George Manyise to 2 years in prison for trespassing and entering the Kruger Park, 5 years for attempted poaching in conspiracy, and for Rodrigues Ngobeni, a Mozambican national, to an additional 8 years for contravention of the Immigration Act. On April 18, 2021, they were tracked by rangers and a helicopter in the Pretoriuskop section, surrounded, and handcuffed. They were carrying a .375 H&H rifle with silencers and cartridges. There were 10,621 white rhinos in Kruger Park in 2011, in 2020 there were only 2,607. There were 507 black rhinos in Kruger Park in 2017, in 2020 only 202 (these numbers are midway between the low and high estimates). Africa Geographic, January 20, 2022; SAPS, March 12, 2022.²⁰



March 14, 2022
Sabi Sands Private Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Arrest at 10 p.m. of a 29-year-old man carrying a shotgun, ammunition, a cutlass, a silencer, and a backpack with food. An accomplice fled. They were not there for a picnic. SAPS, March 15, 2022.²¹

March 18, 2022
Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Sentence of Mike Nyathi to 25 years in prison. On September 17, 2017, he fatally wounded a rhino in the Kingfisherspruit section of the Kruger. He later evaded court summonses after being released on bail and on May 13, 2019, he attempted to poach a rhino in the Satara section. He had been spotted by rangers, chased by the dog squad, and was found hiding under a dead tree. He was armed with a .458 Win Mag CZ 550 bolt-action rifle without serial number and an axe. SAPS, March 19, 2022; News24, March 20, 2022.²²



March 22, 2022
Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Sentence of Brain Phiri, a Mozambican national, to 1 year in prison for contravention of the Immigration Act, 3 years in prison for trespassing in Kruger Park, 7 years in prison on the count of possession of a prohibited firearm, 2 years in prison on a count of possession of unlicensed ammunition, and one year in prison on a count of possession of an axe which in these places and circumstances was considered a dangerous weapon. The sentences run concurrently. Brain Phiri will spend 7 years in prison. With his accomplice who fled, he obviously had the intention and the means to poach one or more rhinos, but the duo, when neutralized by the rangers, had not yet taken action. SAPS, March 23, 2022.²³



March 22 and 24, 2022
Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

- Sentence of Sam Nyagumbi Thobela, 50, and Ezekiel Solomon Mafuyeka, 27, to 16 years in prison for poaching and amputating both horns of a rhino in the Malalane section of the Kruger on January 30, 2020.
- Sentence of Simon Solomon Mhlanga, 43, and Morris Paul Chauke, 41, nationals of Mozambique, and Sam Jack Maluleke, 48, to 18 years in prison for fatally wounding and attempting to amputate the horns of a white rhino in the Pretoriuskop section of the Kruger on September 3, 2015. SAPS, March 28, 2022.²⁴



NAMIBIA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

July 2021 and January 31, 2022

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

The Windhoek High Court ordered the release of Kenneth Tebuho, a school principal, on bail of 15,000 \$ (950 US\$). He must report every Monday and Friday to the police station in Katima Mulilo and is not allowed to leave the city without informing the police. In July 2021, with his wife Joyce Libuku, a mother of 7 children and a vegetable seller, he was stopped at a roadside checkpoint and initially refused to comply before stopping after warning shots were fired. In the car, a bag with 2 rhinoceros horns was found. His wife claims that he was not aware that the bag contained horns and that she herself was not sure that the horns were rhino horns.

Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia, February 2, 2022; Republik, February 2, 2022.²⁵



EASTERN ASIA

TAIWAN

March 2022

Taiwan

"On the Trail" mentioned it in n°16, 19, and 29. Hsiao Jen-se and Chen Pei-hsun, Taiwanese nationals, who were sentenced to 11 years in prison in Eswatini for attempting to smuggle 35 kg of rhino horns, were extradited to their home country under a bilateral agreement between the 2 countries. The transfer was delayed for a year due to Covid-19. Hsiao Jen-se and Chen Pei-hsun are likely to benefit from this. At the time of the incident, the offense they were guilty of was punishable by 5 years' imprisonment in Taiwan.

Liberty Times Net, March 17, 2022.²⁶

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

Dispur, Kamrup District, State of Assam, India

Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma announces that only one rhino was poached in Kaziranga in 2021. "It's a huge milestone in our efforts to eliminate the menace of poaching from our State. Kudos to our forest guards and officials of Kaziranga National Park for their sincere efforts to protect Assam's beloved icon."

Hindustan Times, January 20, 2022.²⁷

KAZIRANGA

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Kaziranga National Park, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

This is the first drag of the year in the park. An adult female rhino between 20 and 25 years old was poached one km from the Hilekhonda camp. Her body is riddled with bullets. The horn had been removed. The death occurred several days ago. The park management believes that the poachers entered the park via Biswanath district.

Hindustan Times, January 20, 2022; The Times of India, January 21, 2022; India Today, January 21, 2022.²⁸



January 24, 2022

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

A senior police official announces that commandos equipped with satellite phones will be deployed at night in vulnerable areas of the park, drone overflights will be increased, and a suspect has been arrested in connection with the recent poaching of a rhino in Kaziranga.

Northeast Now, 24 2022.²⁹

Saturday, January 29, 2022

District of Biswanath, State of Assam, India

Diluwar Hussain is arrested by the police. It is again the follow-up of the recent poaching of a rhino. In the evening, he pretends to take the police to a cache where poachers usually store the horns. When he got out of the police van, he ran off. After the customary summons, the police had no other option than to shoot. He was wounded in the left leg and was taken to Tezpur Hospital.

Northeast Now, January 30, 2022.³⁰

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

State of Assam, India

The poaching of January 20 - continued. A reward of 200,000 rupees (2,664 US\$) to anyone who enables the arrest of one of the 3 men whose photographs and identities are published. The total reward is thus 600,000 rupees. Asmat Ali alias Nalco, Aatur Rahman alias Bassa and Abdul Matin alias Kala live in Biswanath District. An additional bonus of 500,000 rupees (6,661 US\$) will go to whoever can recover the rhino horn.

The Times of India, February 3, 2022; Northeast Now, February 2, 2022.³¹

KAZIRANGA - followed

Thursday, February 3, 2022

Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

Police reinforced by a CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) team attempt to arrest suspects still in connection with the poaching of a rhino on January 20. Around 3:00 a.m., they fled. An exchange of gunfire took place. One of the suspects is seriously injured. During his transport to the hospital and before he died, he allegedly confirmed his involvement in the poaching and gave information on his accomplices. East Mojo, February 4, 2022.³²



Monday, February 7, 2022

Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

Uttam Khaklary was arrested on February 7. He is suspected of being the one who shot the rhino on January 20. He pretends to take investigators to the place where he hid the weapons, ammunition, and a dinghy. At some point, he evaded the patrol's surveillance. He jumped into the river and managed to escape. His body was recovered on Friday, February 11. Northeast Now, February 11, 2022.³³

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Nilambur, Malappuram District, State of Kerala, India

Arrest of Asmat Ali, one of the 3 men for whom a warrant was issued and a reward of 200,000 rupees was offered, 3,500 km from the park and his home. Amir Kusmu who accompanied him was also arrested.

Hindustan Times, February 18, 2022; The Times of India, February 18, 2022.³⁴



Thursday, February 17, 2022

Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

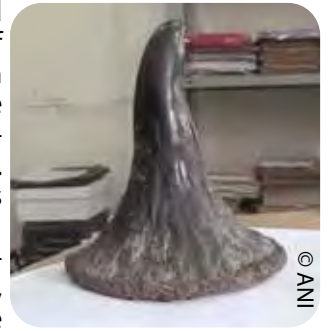
Asmat Ali (alias Nalco), after being escorted back to Assam, allegedly managed to escape during a poaching scene reconstruction by jumping into the Brahmaputra River at nightfall. He was handcuffed. He claimed that the rhino horn was kept safe in a sandbank. A search is underway to find him. East Mojo, February 22, 2022; The Times of India, February 22, 2022.³⁵

February 3, 2022

Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Six arrests, 5 men and one woman. Seizure of a suspected rhino horn weighing 528 grams. The traffickers wanted 7 million rupees (93,260 US\$). After examination, it was found to be fake.

Northeast Today, February 4, 2022; The Sentinel, February 4, 2022; The Times of India, February 4, 2022.³⁶



March 8, 2022

Maubandha, Jorhat District, State of Assam, India



Seizure of a suspected rhinoceros horn. Its weight is about one kilo. The 2 traffickers were drinking tea in a hotel when the police, on the basis of confidential information, surrounded them. Janta Yojana, March 9, 2022.³⁷

NEPAL

January 21, 2022

Tarakeshwar, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

He had killed a rhino in 1998 when he was 35 years old. 23 years later, he was arrested. He was hiding in the Kathmandu Valley. He had been sentenced to 10 years in prison and a fine of 100,000 Nepalese rupees (1,346 US\$ at that time) in February 2001. Khabarhub, February 8, 2022.³⁸



Serval (*Leptailurus serval*). Photo Mikeloomis

On the Trail n°35

Black market feline parts quotation from media or official sources
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Animal	Part	US\$	Country	Ref. (year)
Leopard	Skin	20,000	Zimbabwe	46 (2022)
		13,322	India	62 (2022)
Caracal	A young specimen	11,200	Italy	123 (2022)
Serval		22,000		123 (2022)

AMERICA

MEXICO

January 6, 2022

Mérida International Airport, State of Yucatán, Mexico



Interception of a 2-year-old male Bengal tiger cub traveling in a small wooden box whose travel documents do not specify where he came from or where he is going. In a state of dehydration, he was entrusted to the El Centenario Zoo.

La Verdad, January 7, 2022; Milenio, January 7, 2022; Transponder 1200, January 7, 2022.¹

February 16, 2022

Quechultenango, State of Guerrero, Mexico

An operation to secure Libertad Street by the Army as part of its fight against the criminal group Los Ardillos, which specializes in drug trafficking and mining. Result: seizure of 28 kg of presumed marijuana, 11 vehicles, a motorcycle, stolen car parts, and 3 tigers who were to be "quickly" entrusted to "the competent authority." But 2 weeks later, the inhabitants post on social media photos of the tigers dead in their cages on Libertad Street. Forgotten, they likely died of hunger and thirst. The secretary of environment and natural resources of the government (Semaren) of the State of Guerrero defends himself: "We didn't take charge of them because we didn't know about them." When the agents of Profepa (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente) went to the site, the bodies had disappeared. An investigation has been launched.

State Attorney General's Office, February 18, 2022; SinEmbargo, February 19, 2022; Infobae, March 5, 2022; El Sol de Acapulco, March 6, 2022.²

ASIA

INDIA

January 3, 2022

Chalbari, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India



Electrocution of a tigress about 3 years old. To avoid suspicion, several people got together to transport the body away from the farm. Except for the electrocution mark on the left hind paw, there were no signs of abuse.

The Times of India, January 4 and 22, 2022.³

January 8, 2022

Panpatha, Umari District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Thirteen claws, 2 canines, 3 arrests. The tiger was an adult.

Asianet News, January 10, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 10, 2022.⁴

January 13 and 17, 2022

Ramghat Forest, Gondia District, State of Maharashtra, India



The decapitated and declawed body of an approximately 4-year-old tiger was found by a patrol in the forest. Animal lovers, village leaders, and other officials rushed to the scene. Electrocution is suspected.

The Live Nagpur, January 13, 2022; The Times of India, January 22, 2022.⁵

January 26, 2022

Vanera, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India



The tigress T41, an inhabitant of the Pench Reserve, is in trouble. She has a metal snare around her neck. She was photographed by a camera one km away from agricultural plots. Animal advocates are angry. Tourism is closed because of Covid-19. The 100 or so STPF (Special Tiger Protection Force) guards have nothing to do but track and remove the snares. In response, it is said that they have not been paid for 7 months. On the Chandrapur side, another tigress has been in danger of being strangled by an iron ring since June 2021.

The Times of India, January 28, 2022.⁶

TIGERS - followed

January 28 and 29, 2022
Bhandara District, Maharashtra, India

B2 alias Rudra, a 5 or 6-year-old tiger, is found dead on Friday near the road that connects Paladi to Mathadi near a medium voltage line. Electrocutation by connecting to the public network is suspected. Two burns were found on the shoulder and on the paw. A reward of 25,000 rupees (330 US\$) is promised to whoever can solve the mystery.



On Saturday, Dilip Narayan Narnawre is arrested in the village of Chandori. 22 wooden sticks, 20 insulators, wire bundles, and other accessories useful for electrical trapping are seized. Dilip Narayan Narnawre is said to be the leader of a gang of about 15 poachers who supply bush meat to roadside dhabas (restaurants) in the district and in Madhya Pradesh. The gang goes after herbivores and from time to time big cats fall victim.

Rudra was a resident of Koka wildlife sanctuary. He died at night 5 km from his home.

The Live Nagpur, January 28, 2022; The Times of India, January 29 and 30, 2022.⁷

February 4, 2022

Mysuru, Mysuru District, State of Karnataka, India

It's more than a fashion. The tiger's claw attracts power and luck. It starts from the forest and circulates from district to district. The demand is high in these difficult times when Covid-19 is going on and on. On the side of the road from Begur to Heggadadevanakote, Venkatesh was selling them illegally. Seven claws, a mobile phone, and 11 SIM cards were seized by Mysuru's Forest Mobile Squad. Star of Mysore, February 6, 2022.⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 8, 2022

Banderdewa, Lakhimpur District, State of Assam, India

The 4 canines, 18 claws, ribs, the skull, and skin from head to tail were found in an oil depot. The Bengal tiger is almost re-constitutable. Only his soul is missing.

Tape Yomcha, Naynay Yomcha, and Probin Doley have been arrested. They present themselves as vigilantes. In remote villages of Arunachal Pradesh, the tiger is accused of attacking cattle before he was killed.

Northeast Now, February 9, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), February 10, 2022.⁹



July 22, 2017 and February 12, 2022
Chhindwara, Chhindwara District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

There were 4 of them 5 years ago who wanted to sell the skin of a tiger for 800,000 rupees (12,386 US\$). At the time of the arrest, the 2 students and the 2 businessmen claimed that it had been provided to them by an unknown person and that they had not poached the animal. They were jailed for one month before being released on bail. Soon after, the specialized laboratory in Jabalpur revealed that the tiger skin was actually a dog skin. It is not clear that the 4 sellers knew this. Maybe they were tricked by a mysterious make-up artist. They have just been acquitted.

Hindustan Times, February 15, 2022; The Times of India, February 15, 2022.¹⁰



February 14, 2022

Diddhalli, Tatthalli and Maldare, Kodagu District, State of Karnataka, India

The skin, 7 claws, paws, whiskers, teeth, bones, and skin of a Bengal tiger were found in the hands of 6 tribal people or buried near their huts.

Deccan Herald, February 15, 2022; The Indian Express, February 17, 2022; Star of Mysore, February 20, 2022; The New Indian Express, February 20, 2022.¹¹

February 28, 2022

Sildubi, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India



A tigress, approximately 4.5 years old, is found dead in an extension of Kaziranga, near Mihimukh, the area of the park that attracts the most visitors. Prima facie, she was poisoned. She vomited before she died.

The Meghalayan, March 1, 2022.¹²

March 13, 2022

Kacchepar, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India

A female tiger cub approximately 9 months old was anesthetized. She suffered a fracture of the right front paw possibly caused by a trap. She was transferred to a specialized clinic in Chandrapur.

Nagpur Today, March 14, 2022.¹³



TIGERS - followed

March 13 and 21, 2022

Ghoturli, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra; Rampur, Chhindwara District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



A tiger about 2.5 years old lies lifeless in the thicket. The village alerts the authorities. When they arrive on the spot at nightfall, they record his death. The veterinary doctor Bharat Singh Hada attributes the cause to a territorial fight. In 2 months, it is the 8th violent death of a tiger in Maharashtra. The services are under double pressure from the NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority) and NGOs. The scandal is brewing and it is better to attribute the event to a settling of accounts between tigers than to a settling of accounts between tigers and poachers that the forest officers would have failed once again to avoid.

Bang! Eight days later, 3 men are arrested. Bhaiyalal Darsimha, Manaklal Darsimha, and Dilip Shinu, workers in a brick factory, admit to electrocuting the tiger and a wild boar whose carcass was found a few days later. Rolls of wire and wooden pegs were also found in the area. "The accused are habitual poachers involved in killing herbivores for bushmeat."

Nagpur Today, March 14, 2022; The Hitavada, March 14, 2022; The Times of India, March 21, 2022.¹⁴

Night of March 20 to 21, 2022

Ratta, Balaghat District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Mithun Parte, Sunil Uikey, Ankesh Mandavi, and Tejpal Mandavi, aged 20 to 25, had set a trap by connecting to an 11,000-volt power line. They said they wanted to capture a deer and sell the meat. It was a tiger who was caught. He died instantly and his body was thrown into a ravine by the predators. The police located their homes thanks to the skill of the dog squad.

The Times of India, March 22, 2022.¹⁵



March 30, 2022

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India

The torture of the geolocation collar.

The tiger known as T161 died because of a collar that, contrary to the manufacturer's specifications and the reserve managers' expectations, did not self-eject after its programmed obsolescence. T161 had been fitted with a collar in April 2019 at the age of 1 year and 5 months. His trajectories revealed nothing abnormal in the following 2 years. In February 2022, a trap camera photographed him. As an adult, he was still wearing his teenage collar. An unsuccessful and soon abandoned search was launched to anesthetize him and free him from his burden and electronic trap. He survived in a permanent state of semi-strangulation. When he was found dead in a ravine with his head submerged in water, the geolocation collar that was supposed to protect him from poachers and alert the rangers to any missteps had scraped his skin and penetrated his neck muscles. The wound was colonized by vermin. T161 died of blood poisoning. This is the first time such a tragedy has occurred. The practice of electronic harnessing or tagging of wild animals is increasingly being criticized (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.44).

The Times of India, March 31, 2022.¹⁶

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 31 and April 2, 2022

Bapera, Bhandara District, State of Maharashtra, India



The dead juvenile tiger is found in a canal of the Bawanthadi River. Several senior anti-poaching officials from Maharashtra arrived at the scene and Rahul Gavai, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, hurried to calm things down by putting forward the hypothesis of a territorial fight with a fatal outcome.

He was swiftly countered by forensic veterinarian Gunwant Bhadke. "I beg to differ with the forest officials." "I don't find any sign of territorial fight on the body of the sub-adult." "In territorial fight, paw of a tiger is never taken apart and claws or nails of tiger never go missing."

Indeed, one front paw was amputated and the claws were cut off. Wildlife advocates enter the scene and point out that a Baheliya gang from Madhya Pradesh is active in the area and sets steel traps across tiger corridors.

=>

TIGERS - followed

This is the tenth violent death of a tiger in Maharashtra in 3 months. Caught up in the controversy, Gavai says the whole area will be scrutinized and all options explored.

Two days later, Tulshiram Dashrath Lilhare and Shashikant Lilhare, father and son, were arrested and taken into prolonged police custody. At their home, the police seized bones and skulls of wild animals and a whole range of things designed to electrocute deer and other herbivores. They admitted to electrocuting the tiger near their farm, transporting the body in a cart, and dumping it in the water in the hope that the Bawanthadi River would carry away the evidence of their crime. No information on the paw and claws.

The Times of India, April 2 and 3, 2022; The Live Nagpur, April 4, 2022.¹⁷

INDONESIA

January 11, 2022

Mauna Hilia, Agam Regency, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Evacuation of a 3-year-old female from an oil palm grove by the BKSDA.

Xinhua, January 11, 2022.¹⁸

PAKISTAN

February 25, 2022

Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan

The diffusion on social networks of a video showing a tiger sitting on the passenger seat of a car, with his head sticking out of the window, caused a scandal.

The exhibition of "big cats" is strictly forbidden in the country. Members of civil society want the cat to be seized and refer to the Sindh Wildlife Department (SWD).

The Express Tribune, February 25, 2022.¹⁹



THAILAND

FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 9, 2022

Thong Pha Phum National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand. Border with Myanmar.

The control operation led by a team of 10 rangers inside the park reveals a camp installed 3 to 4 km from the border with Myanmar. Four men ran off. On the spot, they found 2 drying Bengal tiger skins, a makeshift barbecue on which tiger meat is grilled, 4 firearms, a good hundred rounds of ammunition, gunpowder, 4 knives, 3 flashlights, 5 hammocks...



A few days later, on January 13, 4 men surrendered to the police. They are Kukue Yindee, age 37, Jorhaeng Phanarak, age 38, Supachai Charoensap, age 34, and his brother Ratchanon Charoensap, age 30. They say that the tiger cub and the tigress attacked about 20 of their cows within 2 months and they killed them in retaliation. A fifth suspect, age 66, also surrendered to the police, but he denied any involvement in the execution of the big cats. All 5 suspects are facing 11 charges. The order to destroy their houses built inside the park was given on January 18. These constructions are tolerated as long as the occupants respect the local environment.

Bangkok Post, January 12, 13, 14, 16 and 18, 2022.²⁰

February 6, 2022

Khao Laem National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand



A trap camera captures the image of a tigress with her right hind paw amputated while feeding on the carcass of a water buffalo. She can no longer hunt and is in danger of starving to death. With the support of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the NGO Freeland is doing everything possible to find her, capture her, and transfer her to a government shelter where she will be cared for. According to the NGO, the tigress likely fell into a trap set in retaliation after a deadly attack by 3 tigers on a villager in late January 2022. The tigress is suspected of having participated.

The Star (with AP), February 11, 2022; Bangkok Post, February 15, 2022.²¹

VIET NAM

January 6, 2022

Tien Phong, Thai Nguyen Province, Viet Nam

Ngo Van Quan, chairman of the Tien Phong People's Committee was suspended from duty for 15 days. He was caught when he was about to cook tiger meat (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I). Police found a frozen tiger, a tiger skeleton and 2 tiger skins, a Southern serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*, Appendix I) head and bones, and bear bile (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) at his home.



VietNamNet, January 13, 2022.²²

February 2022

Con Tau Voi, Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam

No one wants to hear any more about the tigers of Mau Chien, a trafficker who has been in the wildlife news since 2017 and who has been featured in tiger and tiger cub obituaries (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 87, n°18 p. 57, n°21 p. 67, n°21 p. 118, n°24 p.90 and n°30 p.170). When Mau Chien was imprisoned, his wife took over the management of a so-called tiger farm for educational purposes. A visiting teenager learned the hard way that tigers bite violently. The court ordered the closure of the establishment without seizing and transferring the 11 tigers. Since then, they have been under the care of a "friend" of the family, Mr. Trinh Dinh Bach, in a 3,800 m2 walled and fenced enclosure. One resident eats 10 kg of chicken heads per day in the winter and beef and pork offal in the summer. The tigers smuggled in from Laos have lived almost their entire lives behind bars and are very nervous. The villagers are vigilant and the 2.5-meter-high fences are regularly checked and reinforced. Once a week, forestry officers inspect the guardhouse, count the tigers, and assess the safety of the penitentiary colony. Thanh Hoa Province contacted 11 zoos that are qualified to house tigers. Most of them refused immediately and the others would eventually accept on the condition of not paying any compensation to the Chien family. At the same time, the province after deliberation says that there is no legal basis to seize the cursed tigers from Mau Chien. The province is relying on the State: "We now hope that the higher authorities reconsider granting Chien's family permission to continue taking care of the tigers and providing them with financial support." According to Trinh Dinh Bach, 100 million dongs (4,400 US\$) is spent each year on feeding the herd. In the budget as presented, there are no veterinary expenses.

ANTT, February 15, 2022; VnExpress International, February 16, 2022.²³

March 3, 2022

Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

Nguyen Van Hien, aged 40, was sentenced to 7 years in prison for illegally keeping 14 tigers in what appears to be a clandestine breeding facility (see "On the Trail" n°33 p. 81). According to Ms. Bui Thi Ha, vice director of ENV: "This 7-year prison sentence will serve as a lesson to those who illegally keep tigers in captivity." An Ninh Thủ Đô, March 3, 2022; ENV, March 4, 2022; VnExpress International, March 4, 2022.²⁴



March 15, 2022

Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

Sentence of T. T. H. and N. V. L. to 5.5 and 3.5 years in prison respectively. They had been intercepted in August 2021 while illegally transporting 7 live tigers aged 2 months (see "On the Trail" n°33 p. 80). After more than 8 months of care at Pu Mat National Park, the young tigers were transferred to Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in Quang Binh Province. They have grown up well and now weigh about 60 kg each. Bao Dân Việt, March 24, 2022.²⁵



March 17, 2022

Dien Bien Province, Viet Nam

Luong Van Anh, aged 45, Ngo Sy Thanh, aged 46, and Ngo Sy Tien, aged 55, were arrested for electrocuting and then cutting up a 220-kg tiger to make bone glue. They say they bought the feline in Nghe An Province. VnExpress International, March 18, 2022.²⁶



March 25, 2022

Muong So, Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam

Vo Van Men, Tang Ngoc Khanh and Tang Van Phuc were arrested. In the trunk of their car, the police found the carcass of a tiger weighing over 200 kg. They explained that they came from the province of Nghe An, about 700 km away, which is well known for its tiger breeding and trafficking. They had planned to make bone glue from it and expected to get 615 million dongs (26,950 US\$) for it.

"Virtues" of tiger bone glue or tiger wine, see in particular "On the Trail" n°6 p.53.

Moi truong va do thi, March 27, 2022; ENV, March 29, 2022.²⁷

Early January 2022

Krasnoarmeysky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia



A female Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) is found dead on the ice in a forest area near the village of Limonniki. She bears traces of bullet wounds. The carcass will undergo a necropsy and ballistic analysis in collaboration with the Amur Tiger Center. Amur Tiger Center, January 7, 2022; Nasha Versia, January 7, 2022; RIA Novosti, January 7, 2022.²⁸

January 29, 2022

Imeni Lazo district, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia



32 km northeast of the village of Solontsovy (barely 300 inhabitants), 15 meters from the road used by the VTK logging company, in the middle of nowhere ... the hideout did not escape the attention of the agents of the Khabarovsk Wildlife and Protected Areas Service. Inside was the carcass of a 4 to 5-year-old female Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) shot dead.

Ministry of Natural Resources of Khabarovsk Krai, February 1, 2022.²⁹

February 6, 2022

Novokreshchenka, Primorsky Krai, Russia

Arrest of 2 individuals red-handed while they were trying to sell the skin of an Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) along with other parts for 250,000 rubles (3,200 US\$). According to investigators, it was cheap.

Fontanka.Ru, February 7, 2022; Regnum, February 7, 2022.³⁰

Mid-February 2022

Limonniki, Primorsky Krai, Russia



The Krasnoarmeysky district is definitely not a haven for Amur tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*). After the discovery of a carcass in November (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.68), then another one at the beginning of January (above), this time the authorities have seized a skin from a 64-year-old resident. He claimed to have inherited it from his father, who had bought it from hunters over 12 years ago. The police give little credence to his story. They found a rifle, hundreds of rounds of ammunition and other tiger parts at his home. The suspect is under obligation not to leave the area.

TASS Russian News Agency, February 24, 2022; UssurMedia, February 24, 2022.³¹

Mid-March 2022

Artyom, Primorsky Krai, Russia

Two men had been arrested in September 2021 for trafficking Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) parts (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.81). They claim to have "found" the body in the forest. The court gave credence to their version and issued suspended prison sentences of 4 years and 3.5 years. The prosecutor appealed. He had asked for 7 and 6.5 years of imprisonment to be served in a penal colony, as well as fines of 350,000 and 300,000 rubles (3,400 and 2,900 US\$).

News VL, March 17, 2022.³²



TIGERS - followed

Mid-March 2022

Garovka-1, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

The two men, 36 and 39 years old, thought they had made a good deal. They had just bought the frozen carcass of a gutted Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) and were loading it into the trunk of their van when they came across a roadblock. It was just supposed to be a routine checkpoint, but the tiger was so large that his paws were sticking out between the front seats. The suspects promised not to leave the Krai and to be on their best behaviour during the investigation.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 18, 2022.³³



LIONS - *Panthera leo* (Africa), Appendix II. *Panthera leo persica* (Asia), Appendix I.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

January 2022

Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Attempted rescue of a lion that was deeply injured by a trap in the abdomen. Lion Lovers, January 18, 2022.³⁴



KENYA

January 1, 2022

Taita Ranches, Taita Taveta County, Kenya

The veterinary team rescues a lioness with a deep cut in her neck from a metal trap. Anaesthesia, trap removal, hydrogen peroxide, iodine, antibiotic spray, green clay. Favourable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.³⁵



March 8, 2022

Olgulului, Kajiado County, Kenya

The lion had taken refuge in a thicket of acacia trees. He was limping. He had tried to free himself from his paw trap, but he had only succeeded in squeezing it tighter. A joint team from SWT, KWS, and Lion Guardians reached him with some difficulty to free him. Prognosis is favourable.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.³⁶



NAMIBIA

January 7, 2022

Palmfontein, Kavango East Region, Namibia

Poisoning of a zebra carcass. Death of a lioness. Delhra - Desert Lions Human Relations Aid, January 13, 2022.³⁷



NIGERIA

February 10, 2022

Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Joint operation between the police and the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA). Two traffickers were arrested with a lion cub that they wanted to sell for 6 million naira (14,500 US\$). They were reported before they had a chance.

Premium Times, February 10, 2022; Nigerian Tribune, February 11, 2022.³⁸

ZIMBABWE

February 15, 2022

Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe

It is midnight. Three men sneak out of a maize field and walk across the road. They are heading toward the suburb of Emakhandeni. But just then, police officers on motorcycles pass by and search them, seizing a lion skin. Kudakwashe Chinvanga, Tagarika Chihono, and Samuel Mupunga try to justify themselves: the skin was sold to Chinvanga in 2020 by a friend they know only as Mapetrol. Arrests.

The Chronicle, February 16, 2022.³⁹

EUROPE

MONTENEGRO

January 31, February 10, April and June 2022

Pobori and Krapina, Budva Municipality, Montenegro



A lion cub is seen in the area of Pobori. All means are deployed to find the animal. "In 2 or 3 months he will start eating dogs, cats, or people," according to the Environmental Protection Agency. He is caught on February 10 in Krapina. For lack of a better option, he is handed over to the shelter for abandoned animals in Podgorica. Veterinarians from the NGO Four Paws go there to check his health. He is 5 months old, weighs 29 kg, and is in good health. In April, a Turkish national is arrested. In the following days, 2 accomplices are arrested, including a Turk and a resident of Berane municipality. Tunčer Ciftci, Sejti Ali Akmeš, and Mahmut Nikšić are taken into custody.

In June, the authorities announce the transfer of the cub to the Felida Shelter in the Netherlands.

Balkan Insight, February 9, 2022; Feral BAR, February 11, 2022; Večernje novosti, February 13, 2022; Vijesti, February 16, 2022; Nova S, April 28, 2022; Kurir, May 3, 2022; Four Paws, June 23, 2022; Meta.mk, June 24, 2022.

AFRICA

CAMEROON

**February 23, 2022
Melong, Littoral Region, Cameroon**

Two men are arrested near a traffic circle. They came from Mbouda (West Region), 90 km away. One of them, the owner of a kitchen utensil store, is carrying a bag of graters. Everything would be normal if there were not a leopard skin and an African civet skin (*Civettictis civetta*) in the middle of the graters. The kitchen store is only a façade that hides a much more profitable traffic of feline skins. The 2 men purchase their goods from poachers in the West, Northwest, and Southwest regions then sell their goods in Melong. EAGLE, February 23, 2022; LAGA, February 2022; Alwihda, March 15, 2022.⁴¹



GABON

**January 11, 2022
Nyanga Province, Gabon**

Arrest of 3 men in possession of several leopard skins. China Internet Information Center, January 12, 2022.⁴²

**January 18, 2022
Ndjolé, Moyen-Ogooué Province, Gabon**
Three "indelicate" people are caught haggling over 3 leopard skins and taken into custody. Gabonreview, January 19, 2022.⁴³

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**Early March 2022
Democratic Republic of Congo**

A male leopard is hanged in public after an expeditious judgment by the military and the crowd. His crime was eating a goad according to them. Adams Cassinga, March 5, 2022.⁴⁴



SENEGAL

**February 28 and March 16, 2022
Kolda, Kolda Region, Senegal. Border with Guinea-Bissau.**

At 1:43 p.m., agents of the Tambacounda National Parks Department and the Genral Purpose Intervention Brigade, supported by Eagle Senegal, arrested Amadou Binte Diallo at the Hobbé Hotel. He was trying to sell 8 rifles and a 12-gauge pistol, perfect weapons for poaching or violent crimes. At 2:14 p.m., officers stopped Oumar Nanko at the Nguelaw market. He was in possession of a leopard skin. The weapons and the leopard skin are believed to be from Guinea-Bissau.



On March 16, the 2 men were sentenced to one month in prison, fined 50,000 CFA francs (85 US\$) each and ordered to pay damages of one million CFA francs (1,700 US\$). EAGLE, February 28, 2022; EAGLE Senegal, February and March 2022; Dakaractu, March 2, 2022.⁴⁵

ZIMBABWE

**February 2, 2022
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Israel Negande, aged 25, was fined 20,000 Zimbabwe dollars (175 US\$) for illegally possessing a leopard skin. This nurse's aide at Siyakobvu Hospital (in Kariba) was arrested 360 km from his place of work, in the Joina City shopping center in Harare. He was trying to sell a leopard skin valued at 2.3 million Zimbabwean dollars (20,000 US\$). The Herald, February 1 and 2, 2022.⁴⁶



BANGLADESH

March 18, 2022

Gorgram Union Parishad, Nilphamari District, Rangpur Division, Bangladesh

Two leopards reportedly crossed the border between India and Bangladesh and one of them immediately tried to enter a chicken coop. He died from electrocution and was put on display. The body was taken by foresters.

The Daily Star, March 18, 2022; Dhaka Tribune, March 18, 2022.⁴⁷

INDIA

January 4, 2022

Sorishapal Forest, Cuttack District, State of Odisha, India

Strangled by the snare, the leopard struggled to get out, to no avail. Other traps made of motorcycle clutch wires were dismantled in the area. A 60-year-old man admitted that he had been trying to "trap wild boars." Odisha TV, January 4, 2022; The New Indian Express, January 5 and 6, 2022.⁴⁸

January 5, 2022

Ragdha, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India

Two arrests and seizure of 2 suspected leopard skins.

Orissa Post (with PTI), January 6, 2022.⁴⁹

January 9, 2022

Jaisamand, Udaipur District, State of Rajasthan, India

She was hanging upside down from a tree. At first people thought she was alive and then they gathered to look at her closely. Children took selfies.

Zee News, January 9, 2022; ABP Live, January 10, 2022.⁵⁰



January 10, 2022

Surroundings of Coonoor, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Forest Dept officials said that the nature of injuries on the animal seemed consistent with those sustained in a snare. The believed 3-year-old male was found dead on Monday in the tea plantation. For the past 3 years, traps have been numerous in the Nilgiris. They target Indian hares and wild boars.

The Hindu, January 10, 2022.⁵¹



January 11, 2022

Khordha, Khordha District, State of Odisha, India

Two men were sentenced to 6 months in prison for trafficking leopard skins in April 2021 (see "On the Trail" 32 p. 85).

The Times of India, January 13, 2022.⁵²

January 17, 2022

Ambakata Forest, Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a skin. They wanted to sell it for 1.2 million rupees (over 16,000 US\$). Arrest of 5 men aged between 20 and 33 years.

Odisha TV, January 17, 2022; Pragativadi, January 17, 2022.⁵³

January 19, 2022

Near Sariska Tiger Reserve, Alwar District, State of Rajasthan, India

There wasn't one. There were not 2. There were 3 leopard cubs aged 2.5 years and their 6 to 7-year-old mother, poisoned by half a cow's carcass seasoned with carbofuran or some such garbage.

The Times of India, January 21 and 22, 2022; Hindustan Times, January 22, 2022.⁵⁴

January 20, 2022

Mandla, Mandla District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

One skin, 2 arrests. This is the result of an operation by federal agents of the WCCB assisted by local police.

WCCB, January 24, 2022.⁵⁵

LEOPARDS - followed

January 21, 2022

Jauljibi, Pithoragarh District, State of Uttarakhand, India. Border with Nepal.

Under the direction of Sumit Pandey, Special Operations Officer, Sukhdeep Kumar was arrested in the act of transporting a leopard skin. Jauljibi is a market town partly in India and partly in Nepal. Dainik Jagran, January 21, 2022.⁵⁶

Early February 2022

Behna Kheda, Vidisha District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Bagrunath and Mohar Singh skinned the leopard after catching him in a trap. They were trying to sell the skin, with the claws as a bonus. Waiting for a deal, they had buried it in a hole. The foresters used a sniffer dog to locate the remains. At home, the Singhs were hiding porcupine quills (family Hystriidae), wild boar meat, 2 leg-traps and homemade firearms.

ABP Live, February 7, 2022; The Times of India, February 7, 2022.⁵⁷



February 2 and 4, 2022

Nashik District and Murbad Tehsil and Holachiwadi, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India

The foresters of Shahapur have, in a rightful giving-back, caught the poachers by showing some interest in a leopard skin they had heard about. The bargain was set at 700,000 rupees (over 9,000 US\$). In the end, the seller and 10 of his companions were caught in the nets. The process was long. The modus operandi of the gang was similar to a sleeper cell. They did not know each other physically. They communicated by different means and via encrypted languages. Each at his own level was at work around Igatpuri, Trimbakeshwar, and Sinnar where leopards have been reported for some time. In all, 3 skins were seized.

The Print, February 3, 2022; PiPa News, February 5, 2022; The Times of India, February 5 and 10, 2022; Deshdoot Times, February 8 and 9, 2022.⁵⁸

February 3, 2022

Ubade, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India

The false buyer trick, always. Seven suspects looking to sell a skin fell into the undercover trap set by the police.

The Print, February 3, 2022.⁵⁹

February 4, 2022

Panchala, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

The electric cable was intentionally laid across the ground. The leopard stepped on it. Chandu Shankar Shivarkar, the farmer, is in custody for 3 days.

The Live Nagpur, February 5, 2022.⁶⁰



February 4 and 8, 2022

Shivni, Washim District and Khodshi, Satara District, State of Maharashtra, India



Are the Baheliya of Katni in Madhya Pradesh back in Maharashtra? An adult leopard was caught in a trap on Prakash Kadam land. He was tranquilized, extricated, and sent to the Paratwada care centre.

A leopard cub was caught in another trap. He was released but his front paws are in a very worrying condition.

In both cases, the traps were leg-hold traps. The first one was a "special tiger," and the second one a "special leopard." The hand-forged leg-hold trap is a specialty of the Baheliya.

Opinions are divided.

"In 2013, the Maharashtra forest department had nabbed over 100 tiger poachers from the Baheliya community and their supporters harboring them. More than 20 poachers were also convicted. However, many of them are still at large and these dreaded poachers may have become active again with local support," the forest department said.

The officer investigating the case of the trapped leopard in Shivni has an additional perspective: "Washim district has hamlets of Pardhis, who are traditional bushmeat hunters. It is also possible that the trap was laid to kill herbivores. However, considering the presence of Bahelias in Melghat earlier, all aspects are being explored."

The Times of India, February 9-10, 2022.⁶¹

February 7, 2022

Dongardula, Dhamtari District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Seizure of a skin with an estimated value of one million rupees (13,322 US\$). Arrest of Budhram Markam, Banshilal Markam, and Dhansai Netam. The leopard was allegedly poached in Odisha.

Dainik Bhaskar, February 7, 2022; Patrika, February 7, 2022.⁶²

February 7, 11, and 12, 2022

Bitkula, Bilaspur District, State of Chhattisgarh, India



On Monday, he was searching for dead wood. He came across a dead and mutilated leopard, 7 to 8 years old. The tail, lower paws, and most of the teeth had been taken by the poacher. On Friday, 5 poachers were arrested. They are between 50 and 70 years old. At Nandkumar Patel's house, an axe, a bow and 10 arrows, barbed wire, a butcher knife, a leopard claw, and 2 leopard teeth were seized. The vandals cut off the paws to remove the claws and sell them as lucky charms.

Maxx Daily, February 8, 2022; Republic World, February 8, 2022; The Print, February 13, 2022.⁶³

LEOPARDS - followed

February 8, 2022

Khanapur, Warangal District, State of Telangana, India

Balakrishna, aged 28, and Tirupathi, aged 63, are men of the woods. One day, in the forest, they met 3 people who had killed a leopard and were keeping his skin, expecting to sell it for 1.2 million rupees (16,000 US\$). They offered to act as intermediaries and went in search of a buyer with a selling price of 2 million rupees (27,000 US\$) in mind. They found one. The appointment was to take place in Khanapur to examine the skin and conclude the deal. When they were waiting for the unlikely buyer with the skin in a backpack, the police swooped down on them. They had been betrayed. Telangana Today, February 8, 2022.⁶⁴

February 9 and 14, 2022
Talegaon and Gondpipri, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India

Nandkishore Pimple was both the informant for the forest department and the promoter of poaching. It was someone called Rangnath Shankar Mathere who denounced him. At his house, 21 leopard whiskers, 13 claws, and 12 canines were seized. His accomplices tell the same story. Pimple encouraged them to poach. It began at the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis. He claimed that with tiger and leopard organs and by performing black magic, they would double their income and "rain money from the roof." He would make money out of his so-called secrets and allegedly extort one million rupees (13,320 US\$) from gullible people. This is the same Pimple who helped the Nagpur foresters seize a dozen tiger and leopard skins in the last few months and arrest 85 suspects. One can assume that these services were not free. He used 9 SIM cards to communicate with his contacts on both sides. It took several days for cyber investigators to locate him. He was arrested at his father-in-law's house and placed in custody for a week.

The Free Press Journal, February 10, 2022; The Times of India, February 16, 2022; India Today, February 17, 2022.⁶⁵

February 11, 2022
Bagwada, North Goa District, State of Goa, India

A leopard who had managed to escape from a trap went to take refuge near the house of Ramdas Naik, not without managing to catch a dog before. He was hiding under a metal sheet. Alerted by the inhabitants, the forest men arrived. The leopard was anesthetized and put in a net. He was severely wounded in the neck. He died before the arrival of the veterinarians. The carcass was sent for autopsy and later it was cremated in the forest department's area at Dhavali. The Navhind Times, February 12, 2022; The Times of India, February 12, 2022.⁶⁶



February 14, 2022

Indrana, Jabalpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The leopard was about 7 years old. He was killed by electrocution in a village 40 km from Jabalpur.

The Times of India, February 16, 2022.⁶⁷



February 17, 2022

Gangoda Jat and Madaripur Kakrala, Bijnor District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

On Thursday, the leopard caught in a net in the fields of Vipin Kumar underwent torture. Bamboo sticks were forced into his mouth by the rampaging lynch mob. His paws were bound and he was spitting blood continuously. By the time help arrived, it was already too late. On Saturday, hundreds of farmers demonstrated in front of the court to protest against the indictment of Vipin Kumar.

The Times of India, February 20, 2022.⁶⁸

February 19, 2022

Gangoda Jat and Madaripur Kakrala, Bijnor District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Two days later, the corpse of another 3-year-old male leopard is found in a sugarcane field. The cause of death is currently unknown, but human-leopard conflicts are common in sugarcane fields, especially because they are popular locations for female leopards to give birth to their cubs.

The Times of India, February 20, 2022.⁶⁹



Night of 21 to 22 February 2022

Rengakhar, Rajnandgaon District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

One skin, 3 arrests, 2 escapes into "the jungle." Hindustan Times, February 22, 2022.⁷⁰

February 23, 2022

Becharbagh, Solan District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India

A skin measuring 1.89 meters long, 1.24 meters wide at the hind paws, and 1.19 meters wide at the front paws was seized during a "naka" (road check).

The trafficker lives in Uttarakhand.

The Tribune, February 25, 2022.⁷¹

February 23, 2022

Janapav, Indore District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

This is the third death of a leopard in 20 days in the district. The animal was beaten to death. It is said to be retaliation after the attack of a goat. Three claws and the whiskers were cut off. They were found in the house of Hukum Babariya Bhuriya, a priest in the Hindu temple Panchmukhi Hanuman in Janapav. A forest guard is also in custody. He was aware of the case and had failed to report it to his superiors.

Naidunia, February 24, 2022; The Free Press Journal, February 24, 2022.⁷²

LEOPARDS - followed

February 24 and 28, 2022

Mariani, Jorhat District, State of Assam, India

Complaining about the indifference of the foresters, the locals took matters into their own hands and the leopard by the tail. They dragged him into the Heeleakah Tea Plantation and beat him up. They blamed the beast for threatening livestock. He died 24 hours after being transferred to the CRWC (Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation) in Bokakhat. The Heeleakah Tea Plantation is owned by The Scottish Assam (India) Ltd. It is listed on the Kolkata Stock Exchange and specializes in Assam black tea.

Northeast Now, February 25 and 28, 2022.⁷³

March 2, 2022

Gajapati District, State of Odisha, India

Pabitra Lima was stopped on the road between Machaghara and Khamari Sahi villages with a leopard skin on his back. It has been sent to the Wildlife Institute in Dehradun to check its authenticity.

Odisha TV, March 3, 2022.⁷⁴

March 6, 2022

Nagpur, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

After a week of hide-and-seek in the Kapsi Khurd district, the WCCB got hold of a skin measuring 1.21 meters long and 45 cm wide. They arrested 3 men on Sunday who had been preparing to sell it.

The Live Nagpur, March 6, 2022; WCCB, March 10, 2022.⁷⁵

March 7, 2022

Tuhilamal Area, Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India

One suspected skin. Three arrests.

Pragativadi, March 7, 2022.⁷⁶

March 11, 2022

Phansidewa Community Development Block, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India

Three young men are accused of killing a leopard. They then skinned him and partially ate him. Photos of their festive and unprecedented picnic have been circulating on the networks. The skin was found at the home of Mukesh Kerketta and Pitalush Kerketta. The paws are missing. They denounced Tapas Khura who is said to be the main instigator and who lives and works in Ranichira Tea Garden. Tapas, Mukesh, and Pitalush are between 18 and 24 years old. On November 15, 2022, 2 leopard cubs were rescued from this garden thanks to the report of farm workers and the intervention of forest officials.

ETV Bharat, March 12, 2022; PiPa News, March 12, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), March 14, 2022; News 18, November 15, 2022.⁷⁷

March 2022

Purulia, District of Purulia, State of West Bengal, India

A leopard is reported around Purulia.

Leopard, get out of there. Run away from Purulia, don't let the cattle tempt you even if you don't have much wild left to eat. The first leopard lynching reported by "On the Trail" took place in Purulia in June 2015 (see "On the Trail" no9 p. 51).

The Telegraph India, March 13, 2022.⁷⁸

March 16, 2022

Adnar, Bastar District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Billu Korram fled holding a bag. He was caught. In the bag was the skin of the leopard he had poached with a bow near his home 6 months ago. Wildlife losses are numerous and underestimated in the district. There is no inventory because of the infiltration of the countryside and forests by the Naxalites, who are rebels against the central government. Their Maoist-inspired itinerant groups are partly composed of women. Naidunia, March 17, 2022; Janta Yojana, March 18, 2022.⁷⁹

March 24, 2022

Nashik, Nashik District, State of Maharashtra, India



In Nashik, it's a stampede for leopards. The skin of a leopard cub was found in a wild dump behind a hotel in the city center. It was likely thrown away after a failed deal, or its owner thought it was too risky to transport it. Four days after the find, it was still at the police station. It was supposed to be sent to Hyderabad (Telangana State) to check its authenticity, but the forest department has not yet given its approval. News Drum, March 24, 2022; Deshdoot Times, March 27, 2022.⁸⁰

March 29, 2022

Chariduar Area, Sonitpur District, State of Assam, India

Seizure of 4 teeth, 12 nails, and 109 leopard bones including the skull. Arrest of Bablu Payeng, aged 26.

East Mojo, March 30, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), March 30, 2021.⁸¹



LEOPARDS - followed

March 30, 2022

Kopar, Palghar District, State of Maharashtra, India

Thanks to the diligence of forest officials and SARRP (Spreading Awareness on Reptiles and Rehabilitation Programme) volunteers, a leopard injured in a trap and accused of killing 4 stray dogs was caged and sent to Sanjay Gandhi National Park for treatment. While the leopard was being tracked, located, and captured, villagers were asked not to leave their homes at night to avoid panic. The hunt lasted 6 days.

The Times of India, March 30 and 31, 2022.⁸²



March 31, 2022

Rangaswamy Peak, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Discovery of 2 decomposing leopard corpses. It is a female and possibly a leopard cub. Poisoning is suspected.

The Hindu, March 31, 2022.⁸³



IRAN

Early March 2022

Noor, Mazandaran Province, Iran

A 7 to 8-year-old female leopard is freed from a trap. She is transported to Semes Kandeh-ye Olya Wildlife Care Center, 130 km away. If all goes well, she will be released in 2 to 3 days.

Irib News Agency, March 6, 2022.⁸⁴



IRAQ

Early January 2022

Batifa, Dohuk Governorate, Iraq

A 5 to 6-year-old male Persian leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*) gets his right hind paw caught in a trap set by a goat herder. He managed to take refuge in the heights by dragging the trap for about 10 days. When he is approached by veterinarian Sulaiman Tameer, he has already lost a lot of blood. Frightened, he fell 30 meters and tumbled into a stream. He is immediately surrounded by dogs. Guided by villagers, Sulaiman Tameer managed to anesthetize him. He has no choice but to amputate the lower part of the paw. Transferred to Dohuk Zoo, the leopard underwent a second operation at the end of January, this time performed by 2 specialists, Hans Nieuwendijk, who is Dutch, and Iman Memarian, who is Iranian. They found that he was missing 3 canine teeth. He cannot be released and spends his days shut up in the dark, in a 3 to 4-meter cell, in the middle of jaguar and tiger smells. He can go out in a 120 m²



enclosure after the zoo is closed to the public. Hans Nieuwendijk is worried: "The leopard's current home is the worst place for him. Persian leopards are very solitary animals. They are used to having a range of thousands of miles to themselves." The Guardian, February 21, 2022.⁸⁵

NEPAL

End of March 2022

Lalitpur, Lalitpur District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

Nar Bahadur, a cab driver, was carrying a 2.22-meter-long and 1.18-meter-wide skin in his car. myRepublica, March 28, 2022.⁸⁶

PAKISTAN

Early January 2022

Province of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan

"Dear TikTok, please don't remove my video because I want to show my talent to all [the] world." Such is the caption of a video showing 4 men, one of whom is triumphantly carrying a dead leopard on his shoulders. Acts of cruelty against leopards are common in Pakistan. The 4 men are now wanted. Newsweek, January 14, 2022.⁸⁷



January 22, 2022

Neelum Valley, Province of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan

The female had been hit by 6 bullets, one of them in the spine. A rescue attempt failed. Nearby, the footprints of her suspected leopard cubs were spotted. Efforts to find them were unsuccessful. Experts hope they have found shelter in the mountains. Environmental authorities will be patrolling the area to ensure their safety.



With deforestation, people in Azad Kashmir are increasingly coming across leopards. These encounters are often fatal for the big cats. The Guardian, January 24, 2022; The News International, February 3, 2022.⁸⁸

LEOPARDS - followed

February 8, 2022

Sarai, Province of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan

Another leopard died in Azad Kashmir. Apparently weakened, he was trying to hide and slightly injured 3 people inadvertently passing by his refuge. Immediately, 200 angry villagers made him their scapegoat for the attacks on their herds. They stoned him and strangled him with a rope. A team of 8 wildlife department officers came to help him but could not do anything but wait to recover the carcass. The 2 people who strangled him are wanted.

Dawn, February 9, 2022.⁸⁹

March 30, 2022

Abbottabad, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Arrest of Naeem Khan, Falak Naz, and Abidullah in possession of a leopard cub. They were coming from Battagram district 97 km away.

UrduPoint, March 30, 2022.⁹⁰

CHEETAHS - *Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I

AFRICA

NAMIBIA

February 18 to 22, 2022

Namibia

Visit to Namibia of 5 Indian wildlife experts including the Minister of Environment of Madhya Pradesh. The main subject of this astonishing journey is the Asiatic cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*), whose name comes from Sanskrit and means "the spotted one." In 2009, it was decided by the Wildlife Trust of India to reintroduce the cheetah in India where it was eradicated in 1952. Talks are underway for Namibia to give cheetahs to India. "This would be a wonderful friendly gesture by Namibia in the year when India is marking the 75th anniversary of independence."

Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh was chosen to try this experiment. Its main advantage is that it is free of human settlement to date. India is ready and the arrival of the ambassador cats from Namibia could happen by mid-2022.

The world's cheetah population is now confined to Africa and has shrunk from 100,000 to 10,000 over the last 100 years.

New Era, February 28, 2022.⁹¹

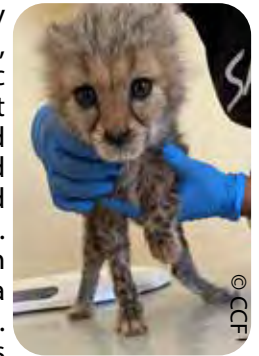
SOMALIA

March 1 and 12, 2022

Buaro, Togdheer Region, and Hargeisa, Maroodi Jex Region, Somaliland Autonomous Region, Somalia

Fifteen cheetah cubs, only a few days or weeks old, were rescued from traffic by Ministry of Environment officials. Dehydrated and hungry, they were tranquilized by veterinarians and placed in the CCF shelter in Hargeisa. Ten days later, 3 more cheetah cubs and the remains of a fourth were seized from 5 men. They were arrested. A sixth is being sought out.

Cheetah Conservation Fund, March 1 and 15, 2022.⁹²



ASIA

INDIA

September 17, 2022

Namibia and Kuno National Park, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Eight of them have arrived. They flew in from Windhoek (Namibia) and landed in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh State) and ended up in a helicopter to Kuno. The cheetahs who were in wooden boxes were released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. "Today the cheetah has returned to the soil of India." "It could be months before ordinary citizens could visit Kuno to spot the animals." "They have now come as guests and it will take some time before they can be used to living in India." The cheetahs have been released into a specially designed enclosure. They will stay for at least a month and begin to adapt to the available prey and the Indian forests.

The Hindu, September 17, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), October 13, 2022; The Indian Express, October 13, 2022.⁹³

SERVALS - *Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 4, 2022

Lincoln, State of Massachusetts, United States of America



A straying serval was found in a private yard with his right hind paw fractured in 2 places. The African feline was malnourished. The fractures occurred several months ago. In the absence of marking, it was impossible to find the person who had been holding him. The unfortunate cat was placed in a Minnesota wildcat shelter.

MetroWest Daily News, January 5, 2022; MassLive, January 19, 2022.⁹⁴

SNOW LEOPARDS - *Panthera uncia*, Appendix I

ASIA

KYRGYZSTAN

Mid-January 2022

Chaldybar, Chüy Region, Kyrgyzstan. Border with Kazakhstan.

The border guards spot a man moving as discreetly as possible towards the border, a bag in his hand. They start to pursue him. The individual runs off as fast as he can, getting rid of his bag. Inside, there is the skull and skin of a snow leopard. The authorities suspect the existence of a smuggling route between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. A snow leopard trophy can be sold for between 6,000 and 60,000 US\$ on the black market.

Border Service of the State Committee of National Security of the Kyrgyz Republic, January 19, 2022; Khabar 24, January 20, 2022.⁹⁵

MONGOLIA

Early March 2022

Bogd District, Ovörkhangaï Aimag, Mongolia

Arrest of Y. for poaching at least one snow leopard. Seizure of a skin.

Daily News, March 11, 2022.⁹⁶

CLOUDED LEOPARDS - *Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I

ASIA

INDONESIA

February 8-9, 2022

Nagari Tarusan Kamang, Agam Regency, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Rescue of a clouded leopard caught in a boar trap. He will be released if medical examinations are positive. The provincial BKSDA chief calls on people to stop setting traps because they can injure or kill protected animals, notably Sumatran tigers.

iNews Sumbar, February 9, 2022.⁹⁷

FISHING CATS - *Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II

ASIA

INDIA

January 20, 2022

Bagnan, Howrah District, State of West Bengal, India



Three fishing cats poisoned. The carcasses of the 3 females were dumped near a paddy field with their paws tied. The emblem of West Bengal is more often found run over by vehicles.

The houses of local residents Prabhas Patra and Pratap Patra were searched. They have been released on bail.

Hindustan Times, January 28, 2022; Conservation India, February 17, 2022.⁹⁸

THAILAND

February 20, 2022

Phop Phra District, Tak Province, Thailand. Border with Myanmar.



Two young fishing cats orphaned after their mother was killed by poachers were found by the border police, who were instead looking for human traffickers. They were sent to the forest protection unit before being released into the wild.

The Nation Thailand, February 21, 2022.⁹⁹

LEOPARD CATS - *Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II except the populations from Bangladesh, India and Thailand which are listed under CITES Appendix I

ASIA

INDONESIA

Early February 2022

Padangsidempuan, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A second chance for a leopard cat captured by a villager and returned to his freedom by the Wildlife Authority (BBKSDA-SU) and the Scorpion Foundation in Dolok Sipirok, Batang Toru ecosystem.

Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, February 7, 2022.¹⁰⁰

PAKISTAN

February 3, 2022

Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan

Two leopard cats are for sale on social networks for 200,000 rupees (1,110 US\$). After an investigation by cyber investigators, they were found in a stall at the bird market. They were transferred to the rehabilitation centre in Islamabad with hopes they can be released.

The Express Tribune, February 3, 2022; UrduPoint, February 7, 2022; Gulf News, February 15, 2022.¹⁰²



Instagrammable mascots should find the anonymity of freedom

VIET NAM

March 12, 2022

Tien Giang Province, Viet Nam

A leopard cat was handed over. He was bought on the street by a man who wanted to save him from wildlife trafficking. Once again, ENV (Education for Nature – Vietnam) reminds that it is better to report traffickers to the authorities than to give them money.

ENV, March 12, 2022.¹⁰³

March 15, 2022

Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam

A leopard cat was handed over. He had been sold as a so-called Bengal cat.

ENV, March 15, 2022.¹⁰⁴



JUNGLE cats - *Felis chaus*, Appendix II

ASIA

INDIA

January 24, 2022

Bharatpur 1, Murshidabad District, State of West Bengal, India

No less than 20 tribal poachers were arrested for killing, among others, 4 jungle cats. They intended to exercise their "right" on the occasion of the hunting festivals of Badna Puja. But the High Court of Kolkata has decreed an embargo on ritual hunting. They were intercepted armed with bows, arrows and spears by Soumyadip Mondal of the NGO Human & Environment Alliance League who alerted the police. Their bail applications were rejected and all remain in custody.

The Times of India, January 26, 2022.¹⁰⁵

JAGUARS - *Panthera onca*, Appendix I

AMERICA

MEXICO

End of January 2022

State of Campeche, Mexico

The remains of a jaguar murdered for his skin and teeth are exposed on social networks. Although his hunting is a crime in the country since 1987, poachers still consider the emblematic feline of Latin America to be a rare and expensive trophy. After the general indignation, a complaint was filed.

El Litoral, February 17, 2022.¹⁰⁶

PUMAS - *Puma concolor*, Appendix II, except for the populations of Costa Rica and Panama which are in Appendix I

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 4, 2022

South Beach, State of Oregon, United States of America

The slaughtered puma had a falsified tag. Investigation revealed that the man poached the puma and paid for a hunting license 2 days later. He denies the charges.

Oregon State Police, January 2022.¹⁰⁷

End of January 2022

Dixon County, State of Nebraska, United States of America

In Nebraska, pumas come to a bad end. For them, it's either the grave or the jail.

A young puma was killed by a State conservation officer who was supposed to protect him. The 8 to 9-month-old male fell victim to a trap near Maskell and the Missouri River. The trap was legally set and the "accidental" catch was reported. Therefore, the case will not be pursued in court. The previous fall, in the same area, an orphaned 4 to 6-month-old puma was saved from death and sent to the Scottsbluff Zoo.

KLKN-TV, February 3, 2022; Lincoln Journal Star, February 3, 2022.¹⁰⁸



The remains of the puma were exhibited "for educational purposes"

EUROPE

GERMANY

March 15, 2022

Neunburg vorm Wald, Bavaria State, Germany

In the car searched by the police late in the evening, there was a wooden crate. In the crate, there was a 40 kg 5-year-old puma. The driver explained that he had bought the feline in the Czech Republic and wanted to keep him as a pet. After anesthetization, he was transferred to a "specialized institution" in the State.

Bavarian Police, March 16, 2022.¹⁰⁹

BOBCATS AND LYNX - *Lynx* spp., Appendix II

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 2022

Gladwin County, State of Michigan, United States of America

Agents of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources made interesting discoveries at 2 taxidermist shops.

- At the first one, 2 bobcats reported to have been "shot" were obviously killed by traps, a hunting method that is not allowed at this time of the year. The poacher also admitted to shooting the corpse of a third lynx to make it look like he had shot him. He claimed that the cat had died in a collision with a car. Finally, as he did not have a license to hunt lynx, he had borrowed the bobcat kill-tags that must accompany the remains.

- In the second case, a bobcat who was "shot" bore the marks of a trap on his paw. The poacher admitted to shooting the lynx after he was caught in the trap.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, January 22, 2022.¹¹⁰

End of January 2022

Pope County, State of Illinois, United States of America

Man indicted for poaching a bobcat.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, January 31, 2022.¹¹¹

End of February 2022

Tygh Valley, State of Oregon, United States of America

Officers receive a complaint about a hunt with dogs. At the scene, there is blood and clumps of hair. Analysis revealed that it was from a bobcat. A suspect from Washington State is identified. He presents a valid bobcat hunting license but further investigations prove that he killed 2 bobcats while his license is only for one specimen, that he made a false declaration, and that he brought them home without authorization from the Oregon authorities. The 2 carcasses are seized.

Oregon State Police, May 2022.¹¹²

End of March 2022

Otsego County, State of Michigan, United States of America

Man indicted for shooting a bobcat caught in a trap.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, April 2, 2022.¹¹³



ASIA

KAZAKHSTAN

January 2, 2022

Kyzyltau Rural District, Pavlodar Region, Kazakhstan

Arrest of 9 poachers in possession of 2 lynx skins and a roe deer carcass (genus *Capreolus*). Two of the suspects are from Almaty region located 800 km away. Lynx hunting is prohibited in Pavlodar Region. Caravan, January 18, 2022.¹¹⁴

January 21, 2022

Ulan District, East Kazakhstan Region, Kazakhstan

A special police operation is launched on January 19 to "improve public order." The inspections are stepped up and many houses are searched. Between 2 arrests for night disturbances and unaccompanied

outings of minors during the night, 2 poachers are spotted near the village of Kamenka. They are coming back with their dogs and a lynx carcass tied on the back of their horse.

YK-news.kz, January 23, 2022; Kazinform, January 25, 2022.¹¹⁵



EUROPE

GERMANY

January 3, 2022

Sömmerda District, Thuringia State, Germany

Railroad employees discover the corpse of a lynx on the side of a railroad track near Buttstädt. He had several bullets in his body. According to the BUND (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland, German Federation for the Protection of the Environment and Nature), the nearest forest where lynx can be found is 3 km away. The poacher therefore carried the cat several kilometers to the railroad track to make it look like an accident. This is the first known poaching of a lynx in Thuringia, if it was committed there.

Jagderleben, January 5, 2022; lifePR, January 5, 2022.¹¹⁶

POLAND

February 24, 2022

Kalisz Pomorski, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland

It is the beginning of the mating season for lynxes. During this time the males are less discreet than the rest of the year in order to attract a female. This is perhaps how a healthy 2-year-old male was spotted. He was killed by a bullet that passed through his right side. According to the veterinarian who examined the carcass, "It was a very precise shot, the person was shooting at an identified target. This cannot be considered a mistake."

Polskie Radio Koszalin, February 25, 2022.¹¹⁷

MULTI-FELINES

AFRICA

NAMIBIA

January 20, 2022

Okahandja, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Dr. Daniel Jordaan, aged 60, was arrested at his private farm. He is accused of illegally keeping 6 leopards, 2 cheetahs, and 2 baboons (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), who were illegally captured and transported, and of engaging in illegal hunting. The value of the animals is said to be one million Namibian dollars (62,900 US\$). On January 27, he was granted bail of 100,000 Namibian dollars (6,290 US\$) - this amount aims to deprive him of the financial means to leave the country - but only under strict conditions: he had to report to the police station 3 mornings a week and was forbidden to leave his home in Windhoek, including to go to his farm. It must be said that the peaceful doctor who has dedicated his life to his patients did not hesitate to threaten to kill one of the police officers who came to question him.

The Namibian, January 23 and 28, 2022.¹¹⁸

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

March 18, 2022

San Martín, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina

The case of the zoo of Luján has a new development. In the first instance, the court of Mercedes had not recognized the crime of animal abuse. The appeal of the Ministry of the Environment was accepted by the federal court of San Martín. The management of the zoo, closed since 2021, is accused of trading in the claws and skins of dead animals and of organizing hunts in enclosures of big cats. Hunters, owners of hunting grounds, taxidermists and collectors of trophies would have benefited from the abuses of the zoo of Luján. The federal court might find them guilty of wildlife crime in conspiracy.

Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, March 18, 2022.¹¹⁹

ASIA

INDIA

March 11, 2022

Dausa, Dausa District, State of Rajasthan, India

Eighteen years after the incident, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had not forgotten Balya Bawaria aka Ram Chander Bawaria. They finally nabbed the elusive fugitive at his home. His co-conspirator was arrested and convicted in 2019. In 2003, he shot a trapped male leopard in Alwar District. He allegedly sold his skin for the modest price of 1,800 rupees (39 US\$). The following year, he shot and killed a female tiger in the Sariska Tiger Reserve, also caught in a trap. He allegedly sold her skin for 50,000 rupees (1,130 US\$).

The Pioneer, March 12, 2022; The Times of India, March 12, 2022.¹²⁰

PAKISTAN

January 6, 2022

Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan

Sajid Ali, the night watchman of the private zoo on the Super Highway, has disappeared. He did not leave empty-handed. An 8-month-old tiger and a one-month-old leopard are missing. This incident is reminiscent of the theft of 3 blackbucks (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan and in Nepal) from Dera Ismail Khan Zoo in February 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.112).

Daily Pakistan, January 9, 2022.¹²¹

THAILAND

February 15, 2022

Nong Lu, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand. Border with Myanmar.

An undercover policeman answers an ad published by wildlife traffickers. He agrees to pay a deposit of 20,000 baht (600 US\$). He is invited to the Sukanya hotel to collect the goods. A bad surprise for Montri Boonsetsiri, age 39, from the province of Phetchabun (600 km away), Duangdee Moolsamart, age 32, from the province of Amnat Charoen (900 km away) and Thewin, age 44, a Myanmar national and member of the Mon ethnic group who entered the country illegally. The police officers seize a tiger skin measuring 3.1 meters long and 80 cm wide, 3 clouded leopard skins, 2 leopard skins and an oryx horn (genus *Oryx*), but also 3 live young leopard cats. The overall value of the seizure is estimated to be worth 2.2 million baht (65,820 US\$).

Bangkok Post, February 16, 2022; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, February 16, 2022.¹²²



EUROPE

ITALY

March 2, 2022

Metropolitan City of Rome Capital, Region of Lazio, Italy

Seizure of a serval, 3 caracals and 6 fallow deer (*Dama dama*) from a private individual who has a large property with a park. The individual did not balk at spending astronomical amounts to satisfy his "passion." According to the authorities, a juvenile caracal costs up to 10,000 € (11,200 US\$), and a juvenile serval is worth twice that amount.

RomaToday, March 10, 2022; Kodami, March 11, 2022.¹²³

RUSSIA

January 2022

Kozino, Moscow Federal City, Russia

A resident is accused of illegally keeping exotic species in her garden. This menagerie consists of lions, tigers, lynx, servals, pumas, lemurs (Lemuridae, Cheirogaleidae, Indridae or Lepilemuridae, Appendix I) and other animals. She will appear in court.

Riamo, January 13, 2022.¹²⁴

March 30, 2022

Kazan International Airport, Republic of Tatarstan, Russia

Seizure of 177 claws and 6 fangs of an unidentified big cat in the luggage of a man departing for abroad. Interfax Russia, March 30, 2022.¹²⁵

WOLVES, FOXES AND HYENAS



Grey wolf (*Canis lupus*). Photo Stephen DeHart

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

End of January 2022

Ibagué, Tolima, Colombia

Three crab-eating fox cubs (*Cerdocyon thous*, Appendix II) in captivity were transferred to the Wildlife Attention and Assessment Center (CAV) in Corcolima. The newborns, one male and 2 females, were fed on pet food and one had a fractured hind leg. El Tiempo, January 28, 2022.¹



The 3 fox cubs were reduced to pets

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 2, 2022

Kaibab National Forest, State of Arizona, United States of America

A Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*, Appendix II) was shot west of Flagstaff. Made famous by his movements from eastern New Mexico to northern Arizona, the male wolf had been nicknamed Anubis.

Emily Renn, executive director of the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project along with other animal advocates had hoped that the wolf's migration to northern Arizona would prove that the natural environments beyond Interstate 40 were suitable for the species. For the US Fish and Wildlife and wolf detractors, Interstate 40 remains the red line that must not be crossed. Animal advocates say the incident is all the more deplorable because Anubis was wearing a bright pink tracking collar when he was shot, so the shooter knew the wolf was an animal tracked by scientists. 105 wolves have been poached between 1998 and 2019.

Arizona Republic, January 7, 2022.²

Canis lupus baileyi, see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 73, n°21 p. 70, n°23 p. 95, n°24 p. 64, n°30 p. 69, n°31 p. 71, p. 72, n°32 p. 95 and n°34 p. 86.

January 8, 2022
Wallowa County, State of Oregon, United States of America



A grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) was found shot on Parsnip Creek Road. The 2-year-old female was equipped with a tracking collar and State police asked for the public's help in identifying the poacher. Conservation groups have also announced a 16,500 US\$ reward for information leading to a conviction. The she-wolf, identified as OR 106, had become separated from the Chesnimnus pack. Tensions between wolf advocates and ranchers have festered in Oregon since the animals returned to the State in the early 2000s. The last count in late 2020 tallied 173 specimens.

Six wolves from the Lookout Mountain pack in Baker County were killed by State officials earlier this year after attacks on livestock.

At least 8 wolves were poisoned in eastern Oregon in 2021 in Union County, west of Wallowa County. After this latest poaching, Amoroq Weiss of the Center for Biological Diversity called for a special prosecutor to look into the matter. She says at least 30 wolves have been poached in the past 2 decades but only 3 prosecutions have been successful. NewsChannel 21, January 11, 2022; The Oregonian, January 13, 2022.³

January 26, 2022
State of New Mexico, United States of America. Border with Mexico.

A Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*, Appendix II) was the victim of a gunshot. For 5 days, he had been looking for a hole in the anti-immigration wall to go to Mexico. "Mr. Goodbar" was airlifted to the Albuquerque BioPark Zoo and his right hind leg was partially amputated. However, a release is still being considered. The Mexican wolf does not recognize borders.

Center for Biological Diversity, January 28, 2022; El Paso Times, January 31, 2022; Fort Worth Star-Telegram, February 14, 2022.⁴

February 10, 2022
Oakland, State of California, United States of America

Called by Defenders of Wildlife and WildEarth Guardians, an Oakland district judge says the US Fish and Wildlife Service has not proven that grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) populations can sustain themselves without the protection of the Endangered Species Act. The ruling comes 1.5 years after the Trump administration's decision in late October 2020 to remove grey wolves from the endangered species list (see "On the Trail" no31 p.71). The decision went into effect on January 4, 2021 in 44 States. During the 2021-2022 hunting season, 24 Yellowstone wolves were killed in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. In Wisconsin, 218 wolves were killed in 4 days (see "On the Trail" no32 p.96). Wolves are accused by the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Rifle Association (NRA) of attacking elk, deer, and domestic livestock and therefore they are opposed to their federal protection. During the trial, the Biden administration aligned itself with the Trump administration by reiterating that wolves are resilient enough to "bounce back" even if their numbers decline rapidly due to high-density hunting. As a result, the Department of Justice is likely to appeal the decision. U.S. News (with AP), February 10, 2022.⁵

February 15, 2022
Cove, State of Oregon, United States of America



OR109, a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), was shot in a field. A reward is being offered to find the killers.

Oregon State Police, February 22, 2022.⁶

February 18, 2022
Stevens County, State of Washington, United States of America



Grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) are found dead by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officers on patrol. The first one seems to have been dead for more than 3 weeks, the others died more recently. There is no trace of blood. Two other carcasses were found in the same area the following month. The toxicological analysis leaves no doubt: they were poisoned.

Stevens County Sheriff's Office, May 4, 2022; U.S. News (with AP), May 26, 2022; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, October 10, 2022.⁷

POLEMICS ON AIR GUNNING

End of February 2022

State of Montana, United States of America

Air gunning in Northern America (Canada and the USA) is an extension of aerial bombardment of civilian populations that applies to grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) populations when they are considered detrimental to agricultural and recreational hunting activities.

"It is accurate to say that, under the federal Airborne Hunting Act, hunting wolves or other animals from the air is prohibited in most circumstances," said Jessica Sutt, a spokesperson for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"The law allows for permitted federal or State agents to shoot from aircraft for defined management purposes."

"We believe that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks may by law be authorized under certain circumstances to hunt wolves from aircraft." "The average person with a hunting license can't shoot from an aircraft under AHA (Airborne Hunting Act)." "On the Trail" n°32 p.96 mentions the helicopter poaching of 2 grey wolves in Montana. The 2 shooters claimed they were hunting coyotes and mistook wolves for coyotes. They were fined just over 400 US\$. The pilot was not prosecuted.

In Alaska the public may apply for permits that allow a pilot and gunner to shoot wolves, or bears in some cases, from the air. In 2016, the US Fish and Wildlife banned the practice but at the request of the Alaska Board of Game, it was validated in April 2017 by the Trump administration. These permits allow for aerial shooting by a backseat gunner, as well as spotting wolves from the air, landing, and immediately hunting.

"On the Trail" n°16 p.61-62 mentioned the project of the government of British Columbia, Canada, to authorize the shooting of wolf packs from helicopters. Despite the protests of 19 Canadian and American NGOs, joined by the Paris-based NGO Robin des Bois, this program was maintained and implemented. "On the Trail" n°32 p.95 testifies to this: 709 wolves were killed from the air between 2020 and 2021. "It's for a good cause," says the staff of the British Columbia Ministry of Forests. "The aerial wolf reduction program is aimed at saving caribou." The wolf is believed to be responsible for their impending extinction. Deforestation, increased fencing, mining, shale gas exploration have nothing to do with it.

AP, February 26, 2022; Global News, October 21, 2022.⁸

March 2, 2022

Helena, State of Montana, United States of America

After the "war on grey wolves" (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) declared by Governor Greg Gianforte (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.96), the NGOs Wolves of the Rockies and Trap Free Montana Public Lands went to court. They called for the suspension of the new rules on the grounds that the public had not been consulted beforehand. The judge rejected their argument. "The Montana Administrative Procedures Act does not apply to wolf hunting and trapping regulations." Wolves are classified as a "species in need of management" under the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks doctrine. They do not enjoy the same status as bobcats, otters, badgers, foxes and other furbearers. Judge McMahon does, however, acknowledge that the use of airplanes and other aircraft to hunt wolf packs is considered illegal under federal law.

Daily Montanan, March 7, 2022.⁹

March 25, 2022

Keating, State of Oregon, United States of America

OR117, a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), was shot in the foothills of the Richland Valley. He was approximately one year old. The Oregon Wildlife Coalition, a wildlife conservation NGO group, is offering an 11,500 US\$ reward to find the culprits. U.S. News (with AP), April 6, 2022.¹⁰

PERU

February 1st, 2022

Pampas de Polanco, Province of Arequipa, Department of Arequipa, Peru



Victim of the most crass obscurantism, a colfeo fox cub (*Lycalopex culpaeus*, Appendix II) was amputated of his tail. This act of cruelty is practiced for magical and ritual purposes because some believe that the tail of the fox attracts luck. Too young to be released, the fox cub was nursed back to health. This nonsense had cost the life of another specimen in the province 2 months earlier. He had been beaten to death before his tail was amputated. Serfor, February 1, 2022.¹¹

ASIA

PAKISTAN

Early January 2022

Jampur, Punjab Province, Pakistan

A striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*, Appendix III) was shot in the Tuman Gorchani mountains. According to the border police, tribal people had killed the female to protect their herds of sheep and goats. They had removed the animal's skin for use in traditional witchcraft and vandalized the den in which her young were housed. Once common, hyenas are fast disappearing from Pakistan. No special conservation efforts are being made to save them from extinction.

Dawn, January 9, 2022.¹²

EUROPE

BELGIUM

March and July 2022

Hasselt, Province of Limburg, Flemish Region, Belgium

- Sentence of a 70-year-old man to 80 hours of community service or a fine of 8,000 € (8,900 US\$). He had placed traps and poisoned baits, allegedly for wild boar, in March 2019 in the sinister former military camp of Beverloo. This area is frequented by a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and her cubs. Another 80-year-old suspect, arrested at the same place with a firearm, was fined 8,000 €.

- Two Dutch nationals aged 57 and 67 were fined 10,000 € (11,140 US\$) and 8,000 €. They too had been caught in the Beverloo camp late on September 6, 2019, while agents of the Agency for Nature and Forests were searching for the newly missing wolf. They were equipped with shotguns and thermal imaging glasses.

Nicknamed "Naya", the wolf was the first to return to Belgium in a century.

At the beginning of July, the public prosecutor's office of Limburg closed the case.

Landbouwleven, October 11, 2021; VRT, March 1 and July 4, 2022.¹³



FINLAND

Week of January 17, 2022

Joensuu, Region of North Karelia, Finland

Arrest of 4 persons suspected of organizing an illegal grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) hunt in late 2020 in Ilomantsi. They are also charged with the illegal possession of firearms.

Wolves in Ilomantsi, see "On the trail" n°34 p.87.

Police of Finland, January 25, 2022.¹⁴

January 27, 2022

Oulu, Region of North Ostrobothnia, Vaasa, Region of Ostrobothnia, and Turku, Region of Finland Proper, Finland

Administrative courts annul grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) hunting permits issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at the request of rural communities. "The goal for the management hunt is to increase the tolerance to the wolf population especially among people who share their environment with wolves and prevent poaching." According to the NGO Luonto-Liitto ("Nature Association"), "this argument has been made for many years but we still have the problem of poaching." "There needs to be a change of attitude towards wildlife." "It's important to talk about the benefits of the wolf – they play a key role in a healthy ecosystem, but news about wolves is pretty much concentrated on the negative side."

Svenska Yle, January 28, 2022; Yle Uutiset, January 28, 2022.¹⁵

FRANCE

January 22, 23 and 30, 2022

Guéret, Department of Creuse, and Limoges, Department of Haute-Vienne, France

Call for murder! After several attacks on flocks of sheep, farmer Florian Tournadre, president of the Coordination rurale de la Creuse, urged his colleagues to "take their hunting rifles" to "kill the wolf" (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), adding "we must do this discreetly to make the corpses disappear. The rural association will reimburse you for the bullets and the bag of lime." The association Le Klan du Loup filed a complaint and an investigation was opened against the belligerent union representative.

At the beginning of December, it was the president of the Coordination rurale de Haute-Vienne, Pierrick Gouteron, who signed a press release stating that "one wolf on his territory is one wolf too many," adding "we will not wait for the always too late conclusions of the OFB (Office Français de la Biodiversité, French Biodiversity Agency) agents to solve the problem. In Haute-Vienne, we have bullets and poison and we will regulate by ourselves! »

Ouest-France (with AFP), January 23, 2022; Info Loup, January 30, 2022.¹⁶

ITALY

January 14, 2022

Arcevia, Province of Ancona, Region of Marche, Italy

Discovery of a dead grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) in a trap near the cemetery. He was previously caught in another trap and was released after a period of care. The carabinieri identified the trapper. At his home, 5 additional traps and 3 kg of game meat were seized.

In the following days, 2 other wolves were found dead in the province, one shot and the other poisoned.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, January 21, 2022; Greenreport, January 21, 2022.¹⁷



January 18-31, 2022

Caprara, Metropolitan City of Bologna, Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy

A pack was wiped out even though it had never had a conflict with humans. In 2 weeks, 5 dead grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) who had been poisoned were found one after the other in a 2 km radius around Caprara, in the heart of the Monte Sole Natural Park. They had eaten meatballs filled with brodifacoum and bromadiolone, rodenticides that are sold over the counter.

Il Fatto Quotidiano, June 1, 2022.¹⁸



End of January 2022

Roccaromana, Province of Caserta, Region of Campania, Italy

A grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) was fatally shot by 3 bullets.

CasertaNews, January 31, 2022.¹⁹

OPERATION CHIMERA

March 15-17, 2022

Between Chiusi della Verna and Monte San Savino, Province of Arezzo, Region of Tuscany, Italy

Anti-poison baiting operation in the National Park of the Casentino forests. Result: 2 dead red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and 2 baits. "Sometimes up to 20 poisoned baits are found," says Marco Mencucci, lieutenant colonel of the dog squad. In this area, the poison has already killed grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), but also brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), and red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II).

Corriere Fiorentino, March 22, 2022.²⁰



LITHUANIA

February 2022

Marijampolė, Marijampolė Region, Lithuania



Seizure of a stuffed grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) being sold on a classifieds website without any accompanying legal documents. It was in the company of several birds and a weasel.

Environmental Protection Department, March 3, 2022.²¹

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NORWAY

January 29 and February 11, 2022

Oslo, Eastern Norway Region, Norway

On Saturday, January 29, at the request of NOAH and FVR (Foreningen Våre Rovdyr, the association "Our Predators"), the court in Oslo suspended the killing of 25 grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) among the 4 packs in the southeast of the country. "Protection of wolves goes beyond mere population regulation." There is a green light for hunting wolves.

On Friday, February 11, the light turns orange. The State appealed and the court ruled in its favour. The "takings" can be carried out without endangering the future of wolves in the country.

On Sunday, February 13, the light turns red. Ten have already died at the hands of a pack of hunters "acting at the request of the government." The hunt had begun on Saturday morning, the 12th, at 8:00 a.m.

Nationen, December 23, 2021; NRK, February 14, 2022; The Guardian, February 15, 2022.²²



THE NETHERLANDS

End of January 2022

Ruinerwold, Province of Drenthe, The Netherlands

The police open an investigation after a video was posted on the Internet showing a motorist chasing a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) at night.

VK Magazine, January 22, 2022; De Stentor, January 26, 2022.²³

End of February 2022

Ugchelen, Province of Gelderland, The Netherlands

Discovery of a decomposing grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) carcass in the forest. Considering the circumstances suspicious, the authorities "cannot exclude human involvement" and open an investigation.

Province of Gelderland, June 7, 2022.²⁴

POLAND

February 2022

Gogolewo, Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland

Poaching of a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II). GK24.pl, April 30, 2022.²⁵

Early February 2022

Gmina Brochów, Masovian Voivodeship, Poland

Rescue of a 2-year-old male grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) whose neck is caught in a trap. He was not seriously injured and was released with a geolocation collar.

Association for Nature "Wolf", February 3, 2022.²⁶



March 9, 2022

Mieściska, Greater Poland Voivodeship, Poland

A 2-year-old grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) died from a wound to the right hind leg inflicted by a shooter.

Association for Nature "Wolf", March 30, 2022.²⁷

March 12, 2022

Słupsk County and Trzebielino, Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland



A grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) with a gunshot wound was suffering from advanced necrosis in his right front paw. He was too badly injured to be saved and was put out of his misery. A few days earlier, a young female wolf lost her life in a trap.

Gazeta Wyborcza, March 21, 2022; Department of Vertebrate Ecology and Zoology of the University of Gdańsk, March 23, 2022; Association for Nature "Wolf", March 30, 2022.²⁸

March 30, 2022

Warta Mouth National Park, Lubusz Voivodeship, Poland



At the eastern edge of the park, a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) lies in a field. " Sweet scents don't tickle his nose anymore; He sleeps in the sun (...) Peacefully. He has two red holes in his right side." (Arthur Rimbaud, The Sleeper in the Valley) Association for Nature "Wolf", March 30, 2022.²⁹

SLOVAKIA

January 16, 2022

Mengusovce, Prešov Region, Slovakia

This is the first case of grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) poaching since the species became protected year-round (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.100). He was shot dead in Tatra Park, the oldest national park in the country. Created in 1949, it covers 738 km².

State Nature Protection of the Slovak Republic, January 19, 2022.³⁰

February 28, 2022

Starý Smokovec, Prešov Region, Slovakia

New poaching with firearms of a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) in Tatra National Park.

Enviroportal, March 2, 2022.³¹

CZECHIA

March 18, 2022

Nachod District, Hradec Králové Region, Czechia. Border with Poland.



A tourist discovers the corpse of a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) in a state of advanced decomposition while walking in the Broumovsko Protected Landscape Area, where 3 packs (at least 14 wolves) live. Among the bones, there are rifle bullets. The Agency for Nature and Landscape Protection file a complaint against a person unknown. It reminds hunters and breeders that "the killing of an individual can disrupt the hierarchy and disrupt the pack, sometimes even increasing the number of attacks on poorly protected livestock," and that wolves participate in the regulation of wild boar and deer populations that cause damage in the fields. This is the third known case of wolf poaching in the country. The previous 2 took place in 2019 and 2020.

Ekolist.cz, April 7, 2022; TV Nova, April 7, 2022.³²

AMERICA

CANADA

March 11, 2022

Quebec City, Province of Quebec, Canada

Jean-Paul Renaud, age 82, has been a dealer of American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) furs for 40 years. He buys the carcasses of legally killed bears from hunters. The only small problem is that he also sells their gallbladders, which is prohibited in Quebec. In court, the accused is silent, but his lawyer is inexhaustible, saying, "the black bear is not an endangered species," and, "it's not a big deal to value an already dead beast by going to get the maximum of the resource, rather than letting it rot in the forest, as the government is asking against the principles of sustainable development." He adds that Jean-Paul Renaud only earns 37,500 CAD (29,350 US\$) a year and that the fine totalling 100,000 CAD requested by the prosecutor would put him in debt for the rest of his life.

According to his lawyer, Mr. Renaud earned 15,000 CAD (11,750 US\$) by selling the gallbladders at 10 CAD/gram (8 US\$/gram). Considering that the average American black bear gall bladder weighs 20 grams, he would have sold approximately 750 gall bladders. He was finally sentenced to 46,125 CAD (\$36,115) in fine and court costs to be paid within 6 months.

The Daily, January 25, 2022; Le Droit, March 14, 2022.¹



March 2022

State of New Jersey, United States of America

A skin, 17 paws, 5 skulls and 9 claws of American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), plus 6 songbirds and one deer skin; this was the macabre collection of a taxidermist. He was accused of improper record keeping, untagged wildlife parts, and importation of out-of-State deer in violation of CWD (chronic wasting disease in deer) policies. The repeat offender was issued 34 summonses. New Jersey Conservation Officers Association, March 26, 2022.⁴

March 10, 2022

Thompson Falls, State of Montana, United States of America

Alfred Bridges of Sanders County pleaded guilty of poaching at least 3 American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), which he baited with barbecue sauce. The man who calls himself "Toby" on his blog where he expresses his disagreement with hunting regulations, had also killed elk (*Cervus canadensis*), moose (*Alces americanus*), and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) out of season. After a year-long investigation, the serial shooter received a 6-month suspended prison sentence, a 9,000 US\$ fine, and 3,500 US\$ to be paid in restitution. His hunting privileges were revoked for 4.5 years.

Sanders County Ledger, October 28, 2021; KRTV, March 10, 2022.⁵



Barbecue sauce and dog food as bear bait

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 2022

Carver Park, State of Oregon, United States of America

Appearance for poaching an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II). The man had killed the animal out of season and without a hunting permit. The remaining bear meat was seized. Oregon State Police, January 2022.²

February 2022

Malheur County, State of Oregon, United States of America

Sentencing of 2 hunters to a 1,400 US\$ fine and 20 hours of community service for poaching a bear (*Ursus* spp., Appendix I or II) with bait and for littering. Oregon State Police, February 2022.³



Mid-March 2022
Springfield, State of Colorado, United States of America



22 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) aged between 6 and 12, former slaves of the bile trade, were flown from Seoul, South Korea to Los Angeles, USA. This is the first phase of an agreement between KAWA (Korean Animal Welfare Association) and TWAS (The Wild Animal Sanctuary). After customs checks, they were taken by special truck to the TWAS sanctuary near Denver, Colorado. After years of cages, pain, deprivation and mutilation, they weigh 70 to 90 kg and they are starving. They discover the 243 fenced hectares of trees and vegetation reserved for them and abundant food. General In-Bum Chun, a highly honoured veteran of the South Korean Army, was in Denver with other KAWA representatives and his speech was full of solemnity. "Americans have gained the respect of the world and Koreans not because of big ships or guns, but because of the humanity of its people which was demonstrated again and again by the Wild Animal Sanctuary in Denver, Colorado." The Wild Animal Sanctuary, May 10, 2022; The Washington Post, May 29, 2022.⁶

March 24, 2022
State of Florida, United States of America



Nine "savages" baited an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) with pastries before releasing their dogs on him and butchering him. After the conviction of Haley Reddish in November 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.75) and Hannah Weiner Scarbrough and Charles Scarbrough in May 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.102), Christopher Elliot Haun was been sentenced to 8 years of probation and prohibition from owning dogs and firearms on June 18, 2021. It is now William "Willie Bob" Edward Landrum, age 42, who is sentenced to 5 years of probation, 200 hours of community service, 4,688 US\$ in fines and 10,000 US\$ in court costs. He is also prohibited from hunting, keeping hunting dogs, and entering the Ocala Forest. Ocala Star-Banner, June 19, 2021 and March 24, 2022.⁷

ASIA

ARMENIA

January 3, 2022
Ohanavan, Aragatsotn Province, Armenia



Discovery of a dead brown bear cub (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) in a trap near a house.

Hetq, January 3, 2022.⁸

CHINA

February 16, 2022
Wanggangping, Ya'an Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China



Sentencing of Chen to 4 years and 2 months in prison and a fine of 6,000 yuan (945 US\$) for illegal possession of a firearm, the illegal manufacture of a firearm, and threatening valuable and endangered wildlife. Chen had set electric traps around his corn plot in 2019. Two Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) were electrocuted. Chen had sold one of the carcasses to a certain Lei for 3,500 yuan (520 US\$) and 2 paws of the other bear to a certain Yang for 1,000 yuan (150 US\$). He would have kept the meat for his personal consumption.

Chongqing Morning Post, February 19, 2022.⁹

INDIA

Early January 2022
Surroundings of Lakhijhar, Bijni District, State of Assam, India

An Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) found injured on the border with Bhutan died while receiving treatment. His head wounds were caused by a sharp weapon. Several people in the area have reportedly been victims of bear attacks recently. Northeast Now, January 3, 2022.¹⁰

February 22, 2022
Jangalapalli, Mahabubabad District, State of Telangana, India



A sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I) struck by an electrified trap. The poachers reportedly had an altercation about sharing the meat. All 12 members of the gang were arrested. The Times of India, February 23, 2022.¹¹

March 4, 2022

Hasnabad Community Development Block, North 24 Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India. Border with Bangladesh.

Two Asian black bear cubs (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) were rescued from international trafficking. Probably smuggled into India from Bangladesh, the 2.5 kg males, approximately 2 months old, were brought to Alipore Zoo. The smuggler is on the run.

The Times of India, March 6, 2022.¹²

13 mars 2022

March 13, 2022

Gudipet, Mancherial District, State of Telangana, India

Sad fate for a sloth she-bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I) caught in a snare. Transferred to the Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad, the adult female had to have a paw amputated. Telangana Today, March 13, 2022.¹³



The she-bear was operated on by Dr. Praveen Kumar of the Nehru Zoological Park

INDONESIA

Mid-March 2022

Setia, Southwest Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Rescue of a Malayan sun bear cub (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) caught in a boar trap. Injured on the right front paw, he was taken care of by veterinarians. The prognosis is favourable.

Suara Sumut, March 17, 2022.¹⁴



IRAN

January 2022

Charam, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, Iran

Discovery in the mountain of the carcass of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) about 5 years old. She was killed a few days ago and her body was burned.

Iranian Students' News Agency, January 24, 2022.¹⁵

NEPAL

Early February 2022

Kathmandu, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

Arrest of a person trying to sell a 240 gram bear gall bladder from Lamjung District in Gandaki Province.

Birendra Johari, February 11, 2022.¹⁶



February 19, 2022

Krishnapur, Kanchanpur District, Sudurpashchim Province, Nepal

Brikha Kami specialized in natural products with a high economic value. When he was arrested by the provincial and local police forces, he had in his house a bear gall bladder (*Ursus* spp., Appendix I) weighing 92 grams. He was also in possession of 524 grams of "Yarsagumba" (*Ophiocordyceps sinensis*), a fungus that is a parasite of butterfly caterpillars of the genus *Thitarodes*. It is said to have tonic virtues and is reputedly (of course) an aphrodisiac.

Cordyceps, see "On the Trail" n°6 p.71, n°11 p.89, n°13 p.111, n°15 p.70 and n°16 p.51. myRepublica, February 20, 2022.¹⁷

VIET NAM

February 13, 2022

Ky Phu, Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam

Arrival of 9 bears at Four Paws Sanctuary. They were handed over by the owners of a private zoo and 2 bile farms located in Binh Duong province. Hindered by the Covid-19 restrictions, the transfer was postponed and the bears had been waiting for their evacuation since April 2021. They are thin. Some weigh just less than 50 kg and one of them has an amputated paw. One of the breeders says, "I loved my bears, and I took care of my bears well. But after learning about the bear sanctuaries in Viet Nam, I realized that my bears deserve to have a better life. So, I transferred [them] and I have tried to encourage others to do so too."

There are reportedly 308 bile bears left in the country.

ENV, February 11, 2022; Newsweek, February 11, 2022.¹⁸

EUROPE

CROATIA

January 15, 2022

Slavonski Brod, Brod-Posavina County, Croatia. Border with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The driver left with a less loaded car, one fewer stuffed brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) one fewer skull, and a less full bank account; 18,000 kuna (2,700 US\$) less.

Customs Administration, January 17, 2022.¹⁹



GREECE

February 26, 2022

Limnochori, Region of Western Macedonia, Greece

A walker reports to the NGO Arcturos that a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) is lying on the shore of Lake Zázari, in a protected natural area where hunting is prohibited. The scenario is easily reconstructed: the bear was hit with boar bullets, fled and collapsed at the water's edge.

ARCTUROS, March 1, 2022.²⁰

HUNGARY

January 10, 2022

Tapolca, Veszprém County, Hungary

In late 2019 or early 2020, a resident of the town of Sümeg buys a stuffed

brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) for 400 € (450 US\$).

He quickly sold it to a resident of Budapest who has a second home in Sümeg. The latter then seeks to resell it in October 2020 through an acquaintance. The story could have

gone on for a long time, but the classified ad was detected by the police and the bear was confiscated immediately afterwards. One of the accused was identified as József Remete, a local councillor and member of the Sümeg hunting association.

The 3 men were sentenced to one year of probation. The Prosecution Service of Hungary, October 4, 2021; Népszava, January 10, 2022.²¹



ROMANIA

End of March 2022

Târgu Mures, Mures County, Romania

A hunter who shot a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) accompanied by cubs during a boar hunt in 2013 had been sentenced initially to a one-year suspended prison sentence. The court had based its conviction on the fact that "the way in which the projectile penetrated the body of the animal rules out that she could have been facing the hunter or standing at the time of the shooting," while the hunter said he had fired in self-defense. He was released on appeal. "Even if the bear did not directly attack the hunter, her behaviour was unpredictable and the defendant was undoubtedly in self-defense," said the judge. "A human life is much more valuable than that of a wild animal."

Adevarul, March 27, 2022.²²

RUSSIA

January 2022

Koch-Agatch, Republic of Altai, Russia

Indictment of a hunter accused of shooting a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) without a permit in the hunting area of the village of Dzhazatarskiy in April 2021. The ecological damage is estimated to be worth 60,000 rubles (800 US\$).

News of Gorny Altai, January 18, 2022.²³

February 7, 2022

Nekhoteyevka, Belgorod Oblast, Russia. Border with Ukraine.

A resident of Kharkiv (50 km away, in Ukraine) was going home with a skull and the skin of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) to "decorate her house." The items were seized by customs officials. Dobrinsky News, February 7, 2022; Regnum, February 7, 2022.²⁴

Mid-February 2022

Gagarka, Republic of Altai, Russia

Police officers were investigating a robbery, they discovered a poaching incident. In the shed of a 44-year-old man, there was the carcass of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) wrapped in a plastic bag. The man hid it there on behalf of a hunter friend who had poached the bear before his eyes in November 2021. They were indicted. Aggravating circumstance: they were hunting from a vehicle, which is a prohibited practice. The ecological damage is estimated to be worth 180,000 rubles (2,300 US\$).

Bankfax, February 16, 2022; Komsomolskaya Pravda, February 16, 2022.²⁵

February 17, 2022

Between Shagonar and Kyzyl-Aryg, Republic of Tyva, Russia

It is 3:45 a.m. when police officers stop a car driving on the Kyzyl-Erzin highway with its taillights off. There are 5 men aged 18 to 48 on board. If they were trying to be discreet, they failed. The police officers ticket them for dangerous driving and take the opportunity to search the car. In the trunk, a brown bear skin (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) with the head and paws attached is spread out. The death occurred less than 2 days ago. None of the men has a bear hunting license. They are held at the police station overnight.

Moskovski Komsomolets Tuva, February 18, 2022; Tuva-Online, February 18, 2022.²⁶

February 21, 2022

Kilmezsky District, Kirov Oblast, Russia

Arrest of a 58-year-old hunter from the neighbouring republic of Tatarstan after the discovery of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) shot dead 5 meters from the entrance to his den. The suspect said he thought it was a wild boar, then changed his story and claimed that he acted under duress: his dog attacked the sleeping bear and the bear then threatened him. He has to pay damages amounting to 180,000 rubles (2,300 US\$).

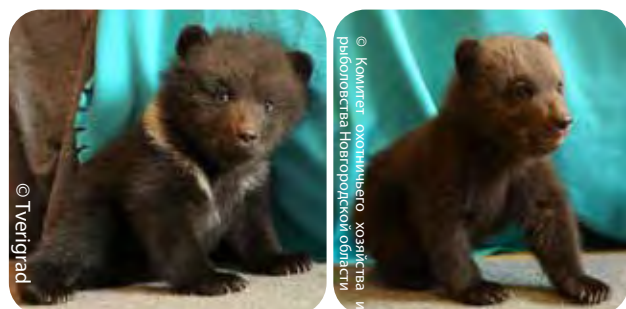
Gorod Kirov.RU, February 21, 2022; Kirovskaya Pravda, March 14, 2022; Vyatka Oblast, March 14, 2022; Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 27, 2022.²⁷

March 2, 2022

Shimsky District, Novgorod Oblast, and Luzhsky District, Leningrad Oblast, Russia

It is 3 p.m. A forest ranger of the Luzhsky district follows suspicious tracks in the snow. He suspects that poachers from the neighbouring oblast passed through. He reports his suspicions to his counterparts in Novgorod. The next day, the scene of the crime is located: it is the den of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), or rather a female bear, who was killed while she was asleep, which is strictly forbidden with or without a hunting permit. An agent hears small noises and discovers 2 cold and hungry cubs, huddled against the corpse of their mother. They are evacuated during the night and transferred to a bear rescue centre in Tver Oblast. A few days later, a 41-year-old suspect is arrested in the Luzhsky district.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 4, 2022; Novgorodskiy Vedomosti, March 4 and 6, 2022; Tverigrad, March 9, 2022; Afanasy-Business, March 23, 2022; Parohod.online, March 23, 2022.²⁸



Mid-March 2022

Kozulsky District, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia

A hunter placed a trap cage with bovine viscera as a trap in the forest. After a few days, a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was caught in it. The hunter killed him with 4 shots and took the corpse home, but not discreetly enough.

He has just been fined 40,000 rubles (390 US\$) to be paid within 90 days. The court was lenient because the defendant pleaded guilty, voluntarily paid back 180,000 rubles (1,750 US\$) for ecological damage, sold his hunting rifle, made a public apology in a local media, and donated to an orphanage. Zapad24, March 15, 2022.²⁹



CZECHIA

March 17, 2022

Brno, South Moravian Region, Czechia

Marek H. had ordered 21 silencers from Sweden, which are prohibited in the Czech Republic. He sold one of them to an undercover police officer. Investigators discovered photos of him posing next to brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) killed in Slovakia in 2010 and 2017. Skulls and skins of bears and lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) were found at his home. He had been sentenced in the first instance to 2 years in prison, a decision that has just been overturned on appeal for lack of sufficient evidence. The investigation must continue. However, Slovakia is now asking him for the equivalent of 27,300 US\$ for the poaching of brown bears on its territory. Blesk.cz, March 17, 2022.³⁰



ANTELOPES, IBEXES, WILD GOATS, MARKHORS,... AND PRONGHORNS



Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*). Photo Clip

AFRICA

ZAMBIA

January 10, 2022

Blue Lagoon National Park, Lusaka Province, and Mumbwa, Central Province, Zambia



Officers from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife apprehended 5 suspects (Wanton Mweete, aged 37, Kelvin Ndongo, aged 37, Phineas Chilala, aged 42, Jackson Munkuli, aged 41, and Festus Lwano, aged 36) in possession of 88 kg of fresh Kafue lechwe meat (*Kobus leche kafuensis*, Appendix II) and 2 hunting rifles.

This antelope is endemic to Zambia and thus attracts many tourists to the national parks. But targeted poaching of this species for bush meat has reduced the population at an alarming rate: from 250,000 Kafue lechwe previously, the population has now fallen below 25,000 individuals.

The 5 suspects, all from the area, were charged with unlawful possession of a protected animal, in violation of section 130 of the Zambia Wildlife Act No. 14 of 2015. They all pleaded guilty and were sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment with hard labour.

Mwebantu, January 19, 2022.¹

AMERICA

CANADA

February 16, 2022

Whitehorse, Territory of Yukon, Canada



Foiled by photos posted to brag online, Alaska resident Donald Harold Lee was fined 8,500 CAD (6,650 US\$) after pleading guilty. He had killed a Dall's sheep (*Ovis dalli*) on the Canadian side of the border in 2017 and claimed to have killed him in Alaska. Lee was also banned from hunting in Yukon for 5 years and his trophy, the stuffed sheep head he had hung on the wall, was confiscated.

Government of Canada, February 16, 2022; The Guardian, March 4, 2022.²



The photo on the left shows Lee. The photo on the right shows Conservation Officer Sean Cox at the same location, proving that the animal was killed on the Canadian side of the border.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 16, 2022

Harney County, State of Oregon, United States of America

Two pronghorns (*Antilocapra americana*, Appendix I in Mexico) killed and 2 others left dying in a "thrill kill." The females were partially devoured by predators and the injured ones were euthanized. A 1,000-US\$ cash reward is offered for any useful information.

NewsChannel 21, January 21, 2022.³

February 7, 2022

Casper, State of Wyoming, United States of America

Gary Lee Ferrier is fined 23,000 US\$ and ordered to pay 22,000 US\$ in damages. His hunting, fishing and trapping privileges are suspended in all 49 States for at least 5 years and until he pays the full amount due. At his Grazing Hills ranch, where he claimed to run an organic beef jerky retail business, he poached pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*, Appendix I in Mexico) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), butchered them, and sold them locally or via the Internet as beef. The Wyoming Game & Fish Department's attention to this scam was triggered by a message on the Stop Poaching hotline. Ferrier, who cites serious financial difficulties, pleaded guilty. In addition to his meat trafficking, he gave clients from Virginia and Florida the right to hunt antelope and mule deer without a licence for 1,500 US\$. Investigators found 14 decomposing pronghorn and deer carcasses on the estate.

Wyoming Game & Fish Department, February 7, 2022; The Salt Lake Tribune, February 8, 2022.⁴



ASIA

INDIA

Early January 2022

Kankani, Jodhpur District, State of Rajasthan, India

The Bishnoi community after raising 150,000 rupees (more than 2,000 US\$) has started the construction of the Blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan and Nepal) Memorial 20 km from Jodhpur (population more than one million). The sanctuary will cover about 2 hectares. A thousand trees will be planted. The work is expected to take a year. "This place is important for us." "The Jodhpur city is expanding and there were apprehensions that some housing scheme or industry might come here in the name of development," says Prem Saran, one of the young Bishnoi who is carrying the project.

It is here that the blackbucks poached in the four-wheel drive vehicle by Bollywood star Salman Khan in 1998 were buried. The memorial will also serve as a care centre for antelopes and other deer poached or injured in road collisions. Salman Khan was sentenced to 5 years in prison after a long judicial process. His lawyers have appealed and the saga continues in court.

The Free Press Journal, January 5, 2022; Hindustan Times, January 7, 2022.⁵

January 15, 2022

Arvi Taluka, Wardha District, State of Maharashtra, India

Police seized the hide of an Indian antelope, or blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan and Nepal), from the house of a doctor arrested in the context of an illegal abortion case.

Hindustan Times, January 15, 2022.⁶

January 17, 2022

Kolkata, Kolkata District, State of West Bengal, India

Forest officials busted a shahtoosh shawl sale and transport racket. These shawls are made from the wool of Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I). Tibetan antelope, also known as chiru, are found in the high Himalayas of Tibet, western China, and far northern India. The males are also poached for their horns. Each shawl costs between 300,000 and 1 million rupees (3,770 and 12,500 US\$) and requires the poaching of at least 3 to 5 antelopes. The agents seized nearly 300 shawls made of pashmina (Kashmiri goat down) and angora (rabbit down), 27 of which are suspected to be actually shahtoosh. The 3 men arrested - Abdul Samad Shah, aged 58, Asif Ahmad Bhatt, aged 21, and Sudarshan Kuswaha, aged 45 - are from Kashmir and were operating in West Bengal and other States.

The Times of India, January 21, 2022.⁷

January 27, 2022

Dewahi Gonahi, Rautahat District, Madhesh Province, Nepal

An injured nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) is rescued and handed over to Parsa National Park for treatment. He was injured in the eyes and back by the spears of poachers who coveted his meat. During the dry season, poachers track bulls, boars, or deer that come out of the forest to graze in the pastures with guns, spears, and traps. The authorities are powerless and the forest rangers are overwhelmed. "Wild animals are being killed every day and shops are selling their meat out in the open. This butchery has to stop," said Saput Bahadur Karki of the NGO Save the Environment of Nepal.

The Kathmandu Post, February 2, 2022.⁸

February 24, 2022

Gajani, Banda District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



Arrest of 4 villagers for poaching a blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal and Pakistan). Ram Ratan Nishadlui, Balveer, Ramkesh, and a fourth man had set a net in the Tindwari forest. The Forest Department recovered the trap, an axe, and the carcass of the antelope.

The Times of India, February 26, 2022.⁹

March 6, 2022

Narayanapuram, Kurnool District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Twelve male blackbucks (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan) were shot by poachers for their skins and meat. The heads were left behind. Why did the poachers kill only males, who are far less numerous than females in a herd, if they were to abandon the trophies? Only the males have horns. Were the genitals sought for black magic? An investigation is underway.

The Hindu, March 8, 2022; The Times of India, March 8, 2022.¹⁰

March 16, 2022

Okhla, South East Delhi District, National Capital Territory of Delhi, India

Seizure of 57 shawls, stoles and running fabrics suspected to contain Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I) or shahtoosh wool from a store and its stock. Joint WCCB and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) operation.



WCCB, March 19, 2022.¹¹

March 27, 2022

Kadamalakunte, Tumakuru District, State of Karnataka, India

The skin, head, horns, and about 10 kg of meat of blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan) were seized. The man trying to sell the meat fled before the arrival of forest officials, who suspect the involvement of at least 3 or 4 other people. Rising prices for mutton - 1 kg costs between 500 and 600 rupees (6.60 to 7.98 US\$/kg) - and goat meat are prompting locals to hunt antelope, but also wild boar, rabbits, deer and peafowls. Bush meat is in high demand as it is considered more nutritious and less polluted.

The Times of India, March 29, 2022.¹²

IRAN

January 2022

Asadabad, Hamadan Province, Iran

Simultaneous search of the homes of 2 poaching suspects. Seizure of 3 rifles, trophies from 2 Cyprus mouflons (*Ovis gmelini*, Appendix I for the population of Cyprus) and stuffed birds: 2 common pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*), 2 partridges, one mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). Two arrests.

Iranian Students' News Agency, January 12, 2022.¹³

Early January 2022

Malayer, Hamadan Province, Iran



The man who poached a female Cyprus mouflon (*Ovis gmelini*, Appendix I for the population of Cyprus) who was expecting twins was sentenced to 3 years in prison for illegal carrying of weapons and fined 2.25 billion rials (59,599 US\$) for damage to wildlife. He will also be banned from approaching Malayer for 18 months upon his release from prison.

Irib News Agency, January 9, 2022.¹⁴

KAZAKHSTAN

January 14, 2022

Ulytau District, Karaganda Region, Kazakhstan

As part of a poaching prevention operation, police officers visit a camp where shepherds spend the winter. They are not really surprised to find a carcass of saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), horns cut off, abandoned near a house. The culprit is a 42-year-old man. And it's not over yet. At 9:30 p.m. they stop a Volkswagen Golf 70 km from Jezkazgan. The 2 men, aged 37 and 62, were carrying 2 saiga antelope carcasses in their trunk.

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, January 17, 2022.¹⁵

January 23, 2022

Kazaly District, Kyzylorda Region, Kazakhstan

Joint operation of the police and Okhotzooptom, the State wildlife protection service. Two individuals on a motorcycle were caught with a saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) carcass, a rifle, and 3 rounds of ammunition.

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, January 26, 2022.¹⁶

February 3, 2022
Kyzylorda, Kyzylorda Region, Kazakhstan



Another joint operation of the police and Okhotzooptom. Seizure of a bag containing a saiga antelope carcass (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) from the trunk of a car. Two arrests. Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, February 3, 2022.¹⁷

February 5, 2022
Zhanaarka, Karaganda Region, Kazakhstan



This time it was not a saiga antelope carcass (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) that was in the trunk, but 844 horns. The driver, aged 29, and 2 accomplices were arrested. According to their statements, the sale price was set at 14 million tenge (31,750 US\$ or 38 US\$/horn).

The last major seizure of saiga horns in the Karaganda Region dates back to April 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.111). Since then, one of the traffickers of 274 horns has been sentenced to 4.5 years in prison, and the other to 3.5 years of "restricted freedom."

KTK, February 7, 2022; Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, February 7, 2022.¹⁸

February 23, 2022
Zhusandaly Reserve, Almaty Region, Kazakhstan

Arrest of a 43-year-old poacher in the middle of butchering a goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*). In his car, there was salted meat and skin from a second goitered gazelle, along with 2 hunting rifles. The whole lot was seized. Police of Almaty Region, February 23, 2022.¹⁹

KYRGYZSTAN

February 6, 2022
Kadamjay District, Batken Region, Kyrgyzstan



There is movement at the edge of the Isfayramsay River. Police officers alerted by local residents discover in the middle of the snow-covered mountains what seems to be a decades-old poacher hideout. Numerous skulls of Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and about 20 skins litter the ground, including fresh ones. Other remains were obviously burned along with tires. According to the informants, the poachers are local to the area but also come from the neighbouring districts of Chong-Alay, Nookat, Aravan, and Osh. Ecomap, February 6, 2022.²⁰

February 26, 2022
Jeti-Ögüz District, Issyk-Kul Region, Kyrgyzstan



Arrest of 6 men aged 45 to 58 during a road check. They were in possession of a black bag containing the meat of a Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan). 24.kg, February 28, 2022.²¹

PAKISTAN

January 2, 2022

Khunjerab National Park, Gilgit-Baltistan Territory, Pakistan

Three Khunjerab Security Force (KSF) officials killed a Siberian ibex (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III) that had 101-centimeter-long horns. Inspector Syed Abrar, Sepoys Abbas Ali, Ali Abbas, and a driver are being prosecuted. Sixteen Siberian ibexes and 2 Himalayan ibex (*Pseudois nayaur*, Appendix III) were legally killed in Hunza by local and foreign hunters after obtaining permits from the Wildlife Department under the 2021-22 trophy hunting program.

Dawn, January 4, 2022.²²

January 12, 2022

Gilgit-Baltistan Territory, Pakistan

Two international gunfighters stars had bought their license to kill. James Kevin from the USA and Viejo Gonzalez Jesus from Mexico shot 2 markhors (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I) in Jutial Conservation Area for 131,000 US\$ and in Bunji in Astore District for 136,000 US\$. On the same day, Mohammad Taha was arrested for poaching a Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III) for meat in Askoli village of Shigar District.

Dawn, January 14, 2022.²³



Licensed poacher James Kevin with his trophy at Jutial Conservancy

Early February 2022

Gojal Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan Territory, Pakistan

When death becomes a competition, the paid trophy race is on. Legal poacher Hisham Khan killed a Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III) in the conservation area controlled by the Passu community in Gojal, Hunza, paying 1,360,000 rupees (7,570 US\$). The most expensive permit - 3,000,000 rupees (16,700 US\$) - was auctioned off in alleged aid of Khunjerab community village. The trophy hunt is supposed to fund wildlife conservation.

Daily Times (with AFP), February 10, 2022.²⁴

February 19, 2022

Chitral National Park, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Two poachers who were trying to kill markhors (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I) in the remote mountains were arrested. Their hunting rifles were seized and they were fined administratively before being tried in court. The national park administration has been criticized for its failure to control poaching, which has led to a dramatic decline in markhor numbers. The watchmen of this park surrounded by villages have not been paid for months.

The Express Tribune, February 20, 2022.²⁵

March 20, 2022

Toshi Game Reserve, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

A poacher was arrested while attempting to kill one markhor (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I). He was fined 150,000 rupees (840 US\$). Dawn (with APP), March 21, 2022.²⁶



RUSSIA (BAIKONUR ENCLAVE)

March 18, 2022

Baikonur, Russian enclave in Kazakhstan

The city and the space launch centre of Baikonur, in the middle of the Kyzylorda Region, are leased by Kazakhstan to Russia until 2050, but it was the agents of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan who arrested 2 men in possession of 641 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) weighing 160 kg. The ecological damage is estimated to be worth 1.5 billion tenge (3.4 million US\$).

Ulysmidia.kz, March 18, 2022.²⁷

TURKIYE

January 16, 2022

Güzelsu, Antalya Province, Türkiye

Arrest of 3 men aged between 37 and 52 years. They had a freshly slaughtered wild goat (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) in the back of their pick-up. They were fined 71,172 liras (5,480 US\$).

Sözcü Gazetesi (with DHA), January 17, 2022.²⁸



January 20, 2022

Tortum, Erzurum Province, Türkiye

In the trunk of the vehicle, the military found an unauthorized firearm and the carcass of a wild goat (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Arrest of the 3 passengers. The owner of the weapon was fined 60,000 liras (4,620 US\$).

CNN Türk, January 28, 2022.²⁹



January 2022

Afyonkarahisar Province, Türkiye

Undisclosed fine for 6 poachers who caught 4 wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). M.K., A.K., I.K., G.K., and H.D. had published photos and videos of their hunting trip on the Internet. Denizliexpress, January 27, 2022.³⁰



January 2022

Antakya, Samandağ and Kırıkhan Districts, Hatay Province, Türkiye

Teams from the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks catch 9 poachers of wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) in the act. Each of them is fined 18,528 liras (1,425 US\$). Körfez Gazetesi, January 31, 2022.³¹



February 2022

Kolonkaya, Tunceli Province, Türkiye

Arrest of 2 men suspected of poaching near the Keban dam. They were carrying the decapitated bodies of 2 wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). They were fined 125,000 liras (9,200 US\$). Halk TV, February 16, 2022.³²



VIET NAM

March 30, 2022

Huong Son District, Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam

The 4 poachers of a Chinese serow (*Capricornis milneedwardsii*, Appendix I) have just been sentenced. Trong Tuong, age 46, has been sentenced to one year and 3 months in prison, Cao Minh Luan, age 48, and Tran Cong Hung, age 31, have each been sentenced to one year in prison, and Tran Cong Trang, age 34, has been given a one-year suspended sentence. Tuong and Luan installed wire ropes in a forest in the district in November 2021. When the Chinese serow got caught in one of their traps, they contacted Hung and Trang to help them transport him. Serow meat sells well on the black market. They had been stopped on the road (see "On the Trail" n°34 p. 106). The serow, wounded in the left front leg, was entrusted to the Vu Quang National Park.

VnExpress International, March 30, 2022.³³



February 5, 2022

Moscow Federal City, Russia

Indictment of an individual for the sale of framed saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) horns on the Internet for 4,000 rubles (50 US\$).

Riamo, February 5, 2022.³⁴

UKRAINE

January 2022

Askania-Nova Nature Reserve, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine

An investigation by the SVIS (Species Impact Victim Statements Initiative) recalls that the so-called Askania-Nova reserve is home to animals imported from all over the world and able to acclimatise to steppe conditions under semi-freedom conditions. In 1970, 70 saiga antelopes (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) were introduced from Russia or another Soviet socialist republic. Saiga antelopes in the wild have been extinct in Ukraine since the 19th century. In 2018, the Ukrainian press reported that a Chinese pharmaceutical company called Shizhen Tan leased 100 hectares of steppe near the village of Kamysch in Kherson Oblast for 7 years and spent 40,000 US\$ on small improvements to accommodate a breeding stock of saiga from Askania-Nova.

According to Viktor Gavrilenko, the reserve's director, the saiga antelopes from Askania-Nova are taken in hand by the staff from birth. "We prepared the animals for captivity ... by raising them from birth. This is how they became accustomed to people and at times do not object to being approached and stroked. These are the antelopes that we rehoused into the new breeding facility."

The Ukrainian press reports that in the same year 2018 the same Chinese company is importing or preparing to import 160 saiga skulls at a price of 400 US\$ per skull [which suggests that the skulls included the horns. Editor's note] and 30 skins at a price of 200 US\$ per skin. This information is consistent with CITES data.

In August 2020, the Kherson press reported that there were 200 saiga antelopes on the Kamysch farm. According to the same source, male saigas are subjected to general anaesthesia and the horns are sawed off and grow back after 2 years.

SVIS stresses that it is impossible that an initial nucleus of about 20 saigas could have generated 175 newborns in 2 years. SVIS is also puzzled by the export from Ukraine of 1,500 horns in one batch to China in 2019 as mentioned in the CITES database. The mathematics of saigas and horns in Ukraine is inconsistent. Saiga antelopes are listed in Appendix II with a zero quota. International trade in wild saiga and their by-products is prohibited. International trade in farmed saiga is permitted subject to administrative requirements in the exporting and importing countries.

Species Impact Victim Statements (SVIS), January 11, 2022.³⁵

GIRAFFES AND OKAPIS

Giraffa camelopardalis, Annexe II

AFRICA

KENYA

January 4, 2022

Lake Naivasha, Nakuru County, Kenya

The giraffe was dragging a trap on his right hind leg. Anaesthesia, disinfection, antidote, and removal of the trap. Favourable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.¹



January 20, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Discovery of a giraffe killed by a poisoned arrow.

Big Life Foundation, January 2022.²

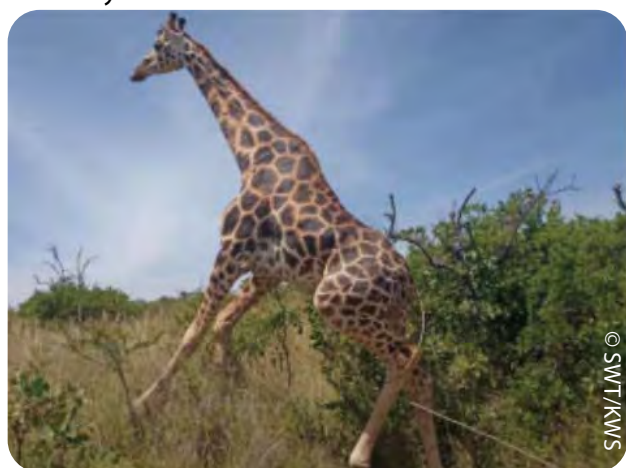


February 5, 2022

Mwea National Reserve, Embu County, Kenya

One had a metal trap on the right front leg, the other had a metal trap on the left front leg. Soft tissues are damaged but prognosis is favourable.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³



February 11, 2022

Mara Triangle, Narok County, Kenya

The large male stood alone at the bank of a river. The wound on his right hind leg could be seen from far. He was limping. After anesthetizing him, the veterinarians removed maggots from the wound by hand and applied disinfectants, antibiotics, and antiparasitics. He was unable to get up on the wet, slippery ground, so he was transported a little further to a place where the ground was dry. Favourable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.⁴

March 6 and 20, 2022

Garissa, Garissa County, Kenya

- The male giraffe was dragging a trap and branches on his right hind leg. Favourable prognosis.

- The male giraffe was dragging a 2-meter-long wire on his right hind leg. When he woke up, he jumped away from the veterinarians. The prognosis is favourable.

SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022; SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁵



March 14 to 15, 2022

Crater Lake Conservancy and Lentolia Conservancy, Nakuru County, Kenya

Veterinarians rescue 2 males with traps attached to their left hind legs. Anaesthesia, trap removal, water rinse, iodine disinfection, fly repellent, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory. Favourable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁶

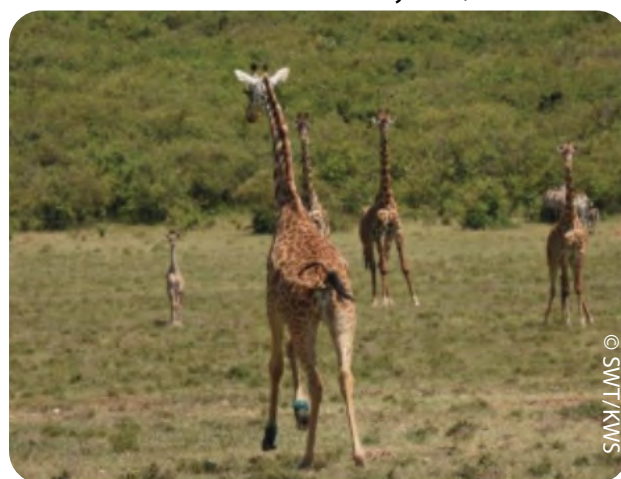


March 16 and 21, 2022

Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The first one had a spear stuck in her right flank. After gently driving her to a less bushy area, the vets anesthetized her, removed the spear, and treated the wound. Favourable prognosis. The second had her left front leg injured by a trap. After anaesthesia, removal of the trap, and treatment, she rejoined the herd.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁷



March 18, 2022

Wajir, Wajir County, Kenya

Sentence of 2 poachers to 6 years in prison. They had been arrested in possession of 2 dead giraffes in 2021.

Noor Ali, March 18, 2022.⁸



March 31, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Arrest of 3 suspects in possession of 5 kg of giraffe meat.

Big Life Foundation, March 31, 2022.⁹

UGANDA

January-February 2022

Murchison Falls National Park, Northern and Western Regions, Uganda

Since the beginning of the year, 7 Nubian giraffes (*Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis*) have been extricated from traps by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and Giraffe Conservation Foundation's mobile veterinary unit. Giraffe Conservation Foundation, March 6, 2022.¹⁰



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 7, 2022

Kirumba District, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Arrest of a trafficker in possession of an okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*) skin. Had he already sold the meat and fat? Authorities received assistance of the NGOs Okapi Conservation and Wildlife Conservation Network. Adams Cassinga, February 7, 2022.¹¹



TANZANIA

Early February 2022

Mamire, Manyara Region, Tanzania

Poaching of giraffes is on the rise in the Manyara region, as well as, to a lesser extent, in the Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions. Their meat is prized and their bones are said to have medicinal properties. Not to waste any part of the carcass, Idd Ally Idd kept the tail as proof of a successful hunt. He had not anticipated that the anti-poaching squad would search his home. Investigators are optimistic: "he will help us to unveil other culprits involved in the illegal giraffe hunting network." Idd allegedly poached the giraffe in the Tarangire ecosystem. The Guardian, February 10, 2022.¹²

February 1, 2022

Burunge Wildlife Management Area, Manyara Region, Tanzania

Two men on a motorcycle are caught by rangers. They leave all their belongings behind and flee. In their bags was 176.5 kg of giraffe meat. The Citizen, June 21, 2022.¹³

March 23 and June 14, 2022

Vilima Vitatu, Manyara Region, Tanzania

Mashaka Boay was sentenced on June 14 to 20 years in prison. He had been caught on March 23 in possession of a quantity of giraffe meat valued at 34 million shillings (14,860 US\$). The Citizen, June 21, 2022.¹⁴



March 27, 2022

Burunge Wildlife Management Area, Manyara Region, Tanzania

Rangers follow the movements of a motorcyclist with interest. When the suspect noticed, he ran for his life without his vehicle and without the 83 kg of giraffe meat he was carrying. The carcass of a giraffe was found in Mswakini. Another carcass had been found a few days earlier.

From January to March 2022, 260 kg of giraffe meat was seized. Giraffe poaching has peaked since the beginning of 2022. Only 5 people have been arrested: Idd Ally Idd, Mashaka Boay, Amos Makala, Twaha Idd, and Jackson Mwenda. The Citizen, June 21, 2022.¹⁵

AMERICA

BRAZIL

End of January 2022

BioParque do Rio, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

BioParque purchased 18 giraffes from the Panama-based company Rare Zoo Logistics at 13,000 US\$ per giraffe. Rare Zoo Logistics, headed by Anna Melino and Eric Bernier, acted as a broker. The company had reportedly already been involved in shady dealings with lions, monkeys, and even dolphins. The giraffes were purchased from Impex Wildlife, based in South Africa's Gauteng province, and named in the contract as "exporter" and "transporter." The cost of transport (a 10-hour flight) from Johannesburg to Rio de Janeiro was 800,000 US\$.



There were 3 giraffes per crate. They landed in Rio de Janeiro on November 11, 2021. They were transported by truck to the Portobello Resort & Safári in Mangaratiba where they were placed in quarantine under severe and improvised conditions. The import protocol validated by Ibama (Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis) required that the animals would be quarantined in the BioParque of Rio de Janeiro. At the last moment, the quarantine site was changed, as BioParque did not have an isolated warehouse high enough to house the new arrivals. The giraffes are not in quarantine, they are in detention. In December, when the prison

guards take them for a little walk in the yard, 6 of them escape onto the public highway and were caught with a lasso with the gentleness of an ox keeper. Three hours later, 3 of the runaways were dead. Since then, the scandal has been brewing but the 15 survivors are still at the Portobello Resort. A court decision ordered their return to South Africa. The Ibama sees nothing illegal in the import permit, while the police report notes that at least 4 surviving giraffes have different identification chips than those that were announced on the import certificate. BioParque confirms and states that "the discrepancies found in the microchips are not unusual." BioParque is suspected to have wanted to eventually resell the imported giraffes to other zoos and make a profit out of them. BioParque claims that the purpose of this import is to contribute to a scientific program that would allow a better understanding of the species' needs and contribute to its survival in cooperation with AZAB (Association of Zoos and Aquariums of Brazil). "There is currently no consolidated program for the conservation of giraffes," AZAB replies. During the import process and to facilitate its approval by Ibama, BioParque claimed to be working in partnership with the GFC (Giraffe Conservation Foundation) which supports pro-giraffe initiatives in their African range. But the GFC formally denied BioParque's claim. BioParque, in addition to the giraffes, had already initiated procedures to import 18 impalas (*Aepyceros melampus*) and 15 plains zebras (*Equus quagga*).

The case of the 18 giraffes further tarnishes the image of zoos in Brazil, is detrimental to zoos live wildlife traveling business around the world.

In 2013, Rare Zoo Logistics S.A. attended CITES in Bangkok as an observer in the person of Eric Bernier and a member of the live animal transport working group. Rare Zoo Logistics S.A. is mentioned in the Panama Papers scandal.

Diario 26, January 28, 2022; ((o))eco, February 8 and May 12, 2022; Telemundo, February 10, 2022; Agência de Notícias de Direitos Animais, May 26, 2022; BBC, August 8, 2022.¹⁶

ZEBRAS AND DONKEYS



Plains zebra (*Equus quagga*). Photo maritzasouthafrica

AFRICA

KENYA

**January 5, 13, 17, 19 and 23, 2022
Soysambu Conservancy and Naivasha,
Nakuru County, and Trans Mara and
Mara Triangle, Narok County, Kenya**



The veterinarians of the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT) Rift Valley Mobile Unit are hard at work. Thanks to their interventions, zebras (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) caught in traps can leave with a good chance of recovery. The beneficiaries of their care in January were:

- A zebra with a wire snare around his neck.
- A zebra with a snare around his left hind leg.
- A zebra with a snare around a front leg.
- A zebra with a wire snare around the neck.
- A zebra with a wire snare around the left front leg.
- A zebra with a wire snare around the right front leg.

- A zebra with a long wire entangled around the neck and one hind leg.

- A zebra with a snare around his neck.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.¹



February 2022

Sarima, Samburu County, Kenya

The poachers took advantage of the unexpected and opportune absence of the ranger in charge of monitoring the area. When his colleagues arrived on the scene, it was too late. One Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*, Appendix I) was badly injured in the abdomen and another in the leg. They could not be rescued. Not far away, a group of poachers was feasting on the meat of other zebras. They were so numerous and well armed that the small group of rangers had no choice but to retreat.

The drought that began in the late summer of 2021 is a double penalty for the animals: they are forced to travel miles to find water, risking encounters with ever more numerous and determined poachers. Oxpeckers, May 13, 2022.²

February 1, 3, 4 and 8, 2022

Marula Estates and Soysambu Conservancy, Nakuru County, Kenya

In February, 8 zebras (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) were released from leg or neck snares by the SWT Rift Valley Unit. All had a favourable prognosis, with the exception of one whose prognosis is guarded. SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.³



February 16 and 18, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

- Arrest of one suspect in possession of 200 kg of zebra meat (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya).
- Arrest of 2 suspects in possession of 180 kg of zebra meat.

Big Life Foundation, February 2022.⁴

Early March 2022

OI Pejeta Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

The zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) had managed to break free from the trap, but it was still wrapped around his neck. It was removed by Dr. Stephen Ngulu. Because of the drought, he had ventured dangerously close to the houses hoping to find water.

OI Pejeta Conservancy, March 13, 2022.⁵



March 2, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Arrest of 3 suspects in possession of 100 kg of zebra meat (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya).

Big Life Foundation, March 2, 2022.⁶

March 2, 12, 15, 16, and 23, 2022

Soysambu Conservancy and Naivasha, Nakuru County, Kenya

The Rift Valley Unit rescued 10 zebras (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) from traps in March. The overall results were positive but the euthanasia of one severely injured individual cast a shadow over them.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁷



March 26, 2022

Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

A female is wounded in the neck. After anesthetizing her, the veterinarians see the wounds of a trap from which she managed to escape. After some care, she wakes up. She galloped off with her foal.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, March 2022.⁸



NIGERIA

January 19, 2022

Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Vincent Isegbe, Comptroller General of the Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Services (NAQS), announces the arrest of several Chinese nationals involved in the slaughter of donkeys and the sale of their hides. "We are aware that there are camps for slaughtering donkeys across the country. We have visited several of those camps, confiscated materials, and destroyed them accordingly. However, some Nigerians and even foreigners have continued." "Donkey slaughter, donkey trade, donkey meat, donkey hide are illegal business." Details of the arrest are not being released so as not to undermine the investigation. A skin sells for between 5,000 and 50,000 naira (12 to 120 US\$) depending on its size.

The Sun, Jan. 19, 2022; Vanguard, January 19, 2022.⁹

January 28 to February 23, 2022

Kaduna State, Nigeria

Donkey hides valued at 20 million naira (50,000 US\$) were seized from trucks. Authorities also seized 157 bundles of used clothes and 110 used tires from abroad.

Daily Post, February 25, 2022; The Guardian, February 25, 2022.¹⁰

Mid-February to mid-March 2022

Lagos State, Nigeria

Review of the new seizures: 44 bags of donkey skins, 3,143 used tires, 320 bales of used clothes, 50,000 kg of rice and 137.3 kg of Indian hemp. The total value is 373,629,700 naira (over 906,000 US\$), the value of the donkey skins is 2.42 million naira (5,870 US\$).

Channels Television, March 17, 2022; New Telegraph, March 17, 2022; The Punch, March 18, 2022.¹¹

March 8, 2022

Yauri, Kebbi State, Nigeria

This time it was donkey meat that was being transported in a truck, 1,390 bags in all. The seizure is estimated to be worth over 42.5 million naira (103,000 US\$).

According to the authorities, such a quantity of meat required the slaughter of 1,000 donkeys. The driver and his passenger were heading to Onitsha (Anambra State), 1,250 km away. They were arrested and the meat destroyed.

The owners of the goods are protesting. According to them, the value of the meat is actually more than 100 million naira (242,600 US\$). The slaughtered donkeys come from Benin, Niger and other neighbouring countries, not from the local population. "Customs is just waking up from slumber when Igbo [Christian] traders are involved. The meat was unapproved by the Islamic religion."

TVC News, March 9, 2022; Vanguard, March 9, 2022; Intellivoire, March 11, 2022; The Sun, March 25, 2022.¹²



March 24, 2022

Kano State, Nigeria



Seizure of 3,712 donkey skins and 3 bags containing 2,754 donkey penises in a truck. Four arrests. The suspects were released on bail. This is the largest seizure of donkey skins ever made according to authorities. The penises are valued at 29 million naira (70,500 US\$ and 25.5 US\$/penis), with the entire seizure valued at 413 million naira (over one million US\$). The seizure was destroyed on May 31 by the NAQS.

Pulse Nigeria, March 24, 2022; TDPel Media, March 24, 2022; Daily Trust, May 31, 2022; Peoples Gazette, May 31, 2022; Chronicle Nigeria, Sept. 9, 2022.¹³

TANZANIA

January 2022

Iringa Urban District, Iringa Region, Tanzania

Livestock farmers say that Chinese-owned slaughterhouses were putting a lot of pressure on donkey populations, that there was an increasing number of donkey thefts. Rhoda Mwangosi said she had been robbed of 2 donkeys and she too welcomed the recent decision by the Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture to suspend the trafficking of donkey meat and hides for 10 years. Inades-Formation's project officer Fortunata Tarimo says that donkeys perform multiple tasks and that in their absence women and girls replace the beasts of burden to some extent. Christina Matayo, village executive officer of Mbweleli, is also pleased and hopes that NGOs like Inades in conjunction with the government will advise farmers and families on how to take good care of the donkeys.

Specioza Kifutu, director of Inades, reminds that the 5 rights of donkeys must be imperatively respected: 1) freedom from hunger or thirst by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour; 2) freedom from discomfort by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area; 3) freedom from pain, injury or disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment; 4) freedom to express normal behaviour by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind; 5) freedom from fear and distress by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering. "As we know a donkey takes a long time to reproduce due to being overworked which negatively affects pregnant donkeys."

In 2016 the number of donkeys was 600,000, in 2022 it will be 300,000.

Donkeys for Africa, Oct. 2018; The Guardian (Tanzania), Jan. 4, 2022; Brooke, Jan. 14, 2022; Mwananchi, May 25, 2022; Karoo Donkey Sanctuary, May 30, 2022.¹⁴

BANTENGs, BUFFALOES, GAURS AND BISONS

ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 18, 2022
Song Rukhavorn Wildlife Sanctuary, Oddar Meanchey Province, Cambodia



Monk Tho Thou Ros of the Song Rukhavorn Forest Community is calling on the authorities to identify and arrest the perpetrators of the poaching of a banteng (*Bos javanicus*) who fled after being seen beating him to death. The community held a cremation ceremony in his honour. The last banteng poaching in the community was in 2021. The Phnom Penh Post, February 20, 2022.¹

INDIA

March 22, 2022
Bali Dubi, Sonitpur District, State of Assam, India

An Asiatic buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*, Nepal Appendix III) was injured by a tractor and then killed for his meat by villagers. He had strayed from Kaziranga National Park. The poacher Rahmat Ali, from whose house the remains of the buffalo were found, was arrested. But the main accused, Hazmat Ali, and the others are still on the run.

The Sentinel, March 23, 2022.²

THAILAND

Early January 2022
Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park, Rayong Province, Thailand



Discovery of the remains of a female gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) around 15 to 20 years old, dead for over 15 days. Park officials found no wounds or bullet holes. However, a nylon rope with the end tied to a tree near the body was found twisted around her left front leg. Trapped, the female died of hunger and thirst. The agents also found dozens of snares and nylon ropes measuring 3 meters long. The carcass was buried.



Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, January 7, 2022.³

EUROPE

BELARUS

End of March 2022
Pruzhan District, Brest Oblast, Belarus

Discovery of the carcass of a European bison (*Bison bonasus*). The animal was reportedly poached between March 10 and 23. The ecological loss is estimated to be worth 76,800 rubles (28,700 US\$). Onliner, March 30, 2022.⁴

RUSSIA

February 4, 2022
Brasovsky District, Bryansk Oblast, Russia

Two European bison (*Bison bonasus*) were found with fatal gunshot wounds. According to witnesses, the hunters were on snowmobiles. In Russia, the European bison is one of the 11 species that must be "conserved and restored as a priority." It is strictly forbidden to hunt them. Around 135 specimens live in the Bryansk Reserve. They often come to feed in the fields and are accustomed to humans.

Argumenty i Fakty (AIF), February 4, 5 and 8, 2022; Komsomolskaya Pravda, February 4, 2022.⁵

DEER, CARIBOUS, MOOSE, MUSK DEER AND FALLOW DEER



Woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*). Photo wild_vision_photography

AMERICA

CANADA

January-March 2022

Côte-Nord, Province of Quebec, Canada

An investigation has been opened one again by the Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks after the death of 50 woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) in hunts organized by the Innu community of Natashquan. An investigation that is still ongoing was initiated in February 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.120) after the death of more than 300 woodland caribou following Innu hunts involving the community of Natashquan. Hunting woodland caribou is totally prohibited in Quebec. There are reportedly only 500 individuals left. Le Journal de Québec, April 2, 2022.¹

COLOMBIA

February 7, 2022

El Dorado International Airport, Bogota, Colombia

Two deer trophies seized when they got off the plane. The hunter-tourists were importing them from the USA. The ban on hunting trophy imports was obtained by Animal Defenders International Colombia in 2021.

Animal Defenders International, February 19, 2022.²

COSTA RICA

End of January 2022

Pococí, Limón Province, Costa Rica

He survived in a tiny pigsty. The antlers of the young white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) had been cut. A family in El Infiernillo had taken him as a pet, feeding him bananas and pig feed. A complaint was filed against the family. La Nación, January 29, 2022.³



The deer will never see the wild again

ECUADOR

January 7, 2022

Los Ríos Province, Ecuador

Videos posted on social networks show the poaching of a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) near the Samama Mumbes wildlife refuge. The Ministry of Environment lodged a complaint.

Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, January 7, 2022.⁴

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 3-4, 2022

Sanpete County, State of Utah, United States of America

A deer is dead. His antlers were removed. The Division of Wildlife Resources, which is offering a reward for information leading to the arrest of the culprit(s), found him on the Clarion Road between the Barex Dairy Family Farm and the Redmond Salt Mine. A blanket was also found: the animal was probably killed elsewhere and moved by vehicle. In 2021, DWR officers confirmed the poaching of over 1,150 wild animals.

KSL Newsradio, January 21, 2022.⁵

January 16, 2022

Clayton, State of New York, United States of America

The poacher was unmasked thanks to photos posted on social networks. The trapper had killed 2 white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) and a coyote (*Canis latrans*). The deer trophy and the body of the coyote were seized and tickets were issued.

New York Almanack, February 11, 2022.⁶

January 2022

Ida Grove, State of Iowa, United States of America

No fewer than 48 violations. Five young men from a ring poached at least 70 deer (family Cervidae), 4 turkeys (genus *Meleagris*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and ducks. Five rifles, 3 shotguns and 3 bows were seized. The hunting licences of Devon Lewis (26), Taylor S. Luvaas (27), Jacob R. Fouts (23), Dylan D. Lewis (22) and Austin T.L. Lewis (19) were suspended. They were ordered to pay 83,000 US\$ in fines and damages.

KELO Newstalk 1320 107.9, March 29, 2022.⁷



Early February 2022

Lennox, State of South Dakota, United States of America

A reward of 2,500 US\$ is offered for finding the person who decapitated and threw a deer (family Cervidae) off a bridge.

KELO Newstalk 1320 107.9, February 6, 2022; The Good Earth Farm, February 20, 2022.⁸

February 11, 2022

Townsend, State of Montana, United States of America

No more trophies for the unlicensed hunter! A lifetime ban on hunting and trapping in the State for Shiloh Berry, 41, who was convicted after killing a moose (*Alces alces*), cutting off his head and discarding his meat in 2019. His sentence also includes a 3-year suspension of fishing privileges, 12,100 US\$ in fines and restitution, and a 5-year suspended prison sentence.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, February 15, 2022; U.S. News (with AP), February 16, 2022.⁹



The antlers of the killed moose were 1.42 metres long

February 20, 2022

Iron County, State of Utah, United States of America

A decapitated deer. Division of Wildlife Resources officers are offering a reward for helpful information after his headless body was found near New Castle. "Many people hunt specifically to use the meat to feed their family, so when one person completely wastes the meat like this, it is a huge loss to all hunters and wildlife enthusiasts," said Officer Josh Carver. In 2021, 1,153 animals were poached valued over 610,000 US\$.

St George News, March 10, 2022.¹⁰

March 10, 2022

Stuart, State of Virginia, United States of America

Dealer and poacher. Michael Ray Clifton, 35, was arrested at his home at 53 Cedar View Lane for trafficking in methamphetamine, but also for killing 2 albino deer (family Cervidae) from his vehicle and cutting off their tails. He was released on a 2,500-US\$ bail pending trial. The chances of seeing an albino deer in the wild are about one in 30,000.

The Mount Airy News, March 11, 2022.¹¹

ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 2, 2022

Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre, Takéo Province, Cambodia



He thought he would be safe at the zoological park. He was recovering with difficulty from a trap that had fractured his right hind leg. The sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*) will never be free again. Thim Ravy, age 33, came to shoot and decapitate him. He sold the head and meat to a guy from his village, Nhim Youheng (alias Chak), aged 49. Ravy was arrested and the trophy was seized from Chak. The Phnom Penh Post, February 27, 2022.¹²

CHINA

February 2022

Leizhou and Suixi County, Zhanjiang Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 4 speedboats carrying 12 tonnes of dried deer tendons. Deer tendons are used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat joint pain and rheumatism. Sika deer (*Cervus nippon*) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) are the targeted species. Chinese Customs, March 1, 2022.¹³

March 24, 2022

Lanzhou, Lanzhou Prefecture, Gansu Province, China

Confirmation of the sentences ranging from 4 to 11.5 years in prison for 4 white-lipped deer (*Przewalskium albirostre*) poachers. They were arrested in August 2020 when they killed and butchered 2 specimens in the Qilian Mountain National Park and were going to town to sell them. China Daily (with Xinhua), March 25, 2022.¹⁴



INDIA

February 28, 2022

Attihalli, Hassan District, State of Karnataka, India

Three men were arrested while cutting up the meat of an Indian chevrotain (*Moschiola indica*) they had killed in the forest that morning. A gun, a knife and 9.5 kg of meat from the animal were seized. S.K. Dharme Gowda, A.S. Subrahmanya and B.R. Sureh were remanded in police custody for 6 days before their appearance in court. The Hindu, March 2, 2022.¹⁵

March 31, 2022

Sekmaiin, Thoubal District, State of Manipur, India

Arrested while carrying 11 kg of fresh Eld's deer (*Rucervus eldii*, Appendix I) or hog deer (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) meat, Moulana Aslam Qasmi was taken into custody for 5 days and investigations are ongoing. Meat samples have been sent to the Wildlife Institute of India in Dehradun to identify the species. The Keibul Lamjao National Park is home to less than 300 deer. The Sentinel, April 2, 2022.¹⁶

INDONESIA

January 13, 2022

Iskandar Airport of Pangkalan Bun, West Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Seizure of a set of deer antlers from a parcel bound for Tajau Pecah in South Kalimantan. Customs officers tried to contact the recipient in vain. Kalteng Ekspres, January 14, 2021.¹⁷

MONGOLIA

OPERATION NEW MOON 2022

January 27, 2022

Bulgan Sum, Bulgan Aimag, Mongolia

Arrest of B., M., N., and Y. in possession of 8 preputial glands of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II). They say they killed the animals in Khüder sum (Selenge aimag), 450 km away.

Montsame News Agency, January

27, 2022; Ulaanbaatar News, January 31, 2022.¹⁸



UZBEKISTAN

February 23, 2022

Beruniy, Republic of Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan



4:30 a.m. Gunfire is heard in the forest. The guards head for the scene. 7:00 a.m. They finally find traces of blood on a road and the marks of a trap in a ditch. 9:30 a.m. The drops of blood lead them in front of a farm. Next to the field, there is the head, legs, skin, and viscera of a Bokharan deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*, Appendix II). They inform the district authorities, who search the house and find an unregistered motorcycle that has just been washed but still has bloodstains and tufts of hair on it.

Sh. A., age 29, admits to killing a Bokharan deer with an unlicensed rifle. He gave the antlers to an accomplice, M.K. Both were arrested.

The Bokharan deer live in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. In the 1960s, only 350 to 400 of them remained due to intensive hunting. Thanks to protective measures, their population had recovered to 1,900 individuals in 2011. The main threats today are poaching and to a lesser extent habitat destruction.

Karakalpakstan Ecology Committee, February 27, 2022.¹⁹

EUROPE

HUNGARY

March 9, 2022

Nagyatád, Somogy County, Hungary

Indictment of a man in his 50s for the poaching of a male red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and a male fallow deer (*Dama dama*) estimated to be worth 100,000 and 850,000 forints (310 and 2,610 US\$) respectively. The events took place in 2019 and 2020 in the vicinity of Csurgó (Somogy County) when the man had a hunting license limited to Zala County. Investigators had found frozen meat and trophies, including an antlered skull, at his home. The Prosecution Service of Hungary, March 9, 2022.²⁰

March 2022

Marcali, Somogy County, Hungary

Indictment of 5 men, including a mayor and a professional hunter, for shooting 3 male red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) in August and September 2020 in the vicinity of Marcali, on land where they did not have permission to hunt. One of the deer was wearing a geolocation collar, which they carefully broke and threw into a stream. An accomplice had then prepared trophies. The professional hunter is also accused of shooting 2 more deer in December 2020 near Nagykanizsa (Zala County). Index.hu, March 21, 2022.²¹

POLAND

February 3, 2022

Gmina Rudnik, Lubin Voivodeship, Poland



Forest rangers find a steel wire snare. Determined to identify the troublemaker, they put a camera and a camera trap. The individual returns very quickly to check and move his trap. The forest rangers easily locate his home and search it. They seize traps and trophies of deer (family Cervidae).

Lublin112.pl, February 3, 2022.²²

ROMANIA

February 8, 2022

Iadara, Maramures County, Romania



Arrest of a 44-year-old man. Seizure at his home of 6 deer antlers (family Cervidae), 6 kg of meat, 2 hunting trophies, 5 traps and 2 guns.

Someseanul, February 8, 2022.²³

RUSSIA

Mid-January 2022

On the edge of the Altai Nature Reserve, Republic of Altai, Russia



A resident of the village of Artybash goes to Yaylyu, 25 km away, to set 11 traps next to the reserve, supposedly to catch hares. He spends the night there to check his traps early in the morning. But it is too late. The reserve guards have already started their rounds and found a trapped Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II). He is arrested by policemen with his undeclared rifle.

News of Gorny Altai, January 17, 2022.²⁴

Week of January 17, 2022

Pozarym Reserve, Republic of Khakassia, Russia



Anti-poaching operation in the reserve. Guards travelled 230 km by snowmobile, identified the tracks of 2 suspects who came by ski from the neighbouring republic of Tuva and removed 28 traps intended for Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II).

The Pozarym Reserve is home to snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I), Asiatic wild dogs (*Cuon alpinus*, Appendix II), Altai argalis (*Ovis ammon*, Appendix II), and Himalayan ibexes (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan).

Business Information Agency, January 24, 2022.²⁵

January 28, 2022
Pozarym Reserve, Republic of
Khakassia, Russia

Another anti-poaching operation led to the removal of 110 traps for Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II). The 2 mysterious ski poachers from the republic of Tuva are reportedly still at work. Abakan, January 28, 2022.²⁶



March 2, 2022
Saylyugemsky National Park, Republic
of Altai, Russia

Arrest of a 26-year-old man after the discovery of 8 metal traps in the park. He had not bothered to erase his tracks in the snow. He admitted targeting Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II). The area where the traps were set is frequented by snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I). News of Gorny Altai, March 2, 2022; Tayga Info, March 2, 2022.²⁷



March 14, 2022
Mansky District, Krasnoyarsk Krai,
Russia

The 2 men did not have a hunting license, they were hunting outside the authorized dates, and in addition they had caught a Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) in their traps. Five sables (*Martes zibellina*) had also been trapped. The ecological damage was estimated to be worth 405,000 rubles (3,930 US\$). Moskovsky Komsomolets Krasnoyarsk, March 14, 2022.²⁸



Mid-March 2022
Tunkinsky District, Republic of
Buryatia, Russia

Sentence of a man to 3 years and 2 months' suspended imprisonment for using a trap to poach 2 Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) in the Tunkinsky National Park in February 2021. He must also pay 600,000 rubles (5,830 US\$) for ecological damage.

Tunkinsky National Park, 11,837 km², is home to 103 species listed in the Russian Red Book, including snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I), Pallas's cats (*Otocolobus manul*, Appendix II), Asiatic wild dogs (*Cuon alpinus*, Appendix II), Altai argalis (*Ovis ammon*, Appendix II) and Himalayan ibexes (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Number One, March 18, 2022.²⁹



March 23, 2022
Bokhansky District, Irkutsk Oblast,
Russia

Arrest of a 30-year-old man and seizure of 4 carcasses of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) and metal traps. The suspect admitted to poaching musk deer only for their preputial glands. He has had prior run-ins with the law. Pending trial, he has agreed to report regularly to the police station and to be of "irreproachable" behavior. Altair, March 23, 2022; IrkSib, March 23, 2022.³⁰





Young vicunas (*Vicugna vicugna*). Photo Subadulto

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

February 18, 2022

On the national road 52, Province of Jujuy, Argentina

Thirty vicuna (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) skins seized in a Peugeot 504 during a roadside check. The driver attempted to flee before being arrested. Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, February 18, 2022.¹



PERU

March 25, 2022

District of San Pedro, Province of Lucanas, Department of Ayacucho, Peru

Poachers left the skinned remains of 20 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) in the territory of the Association for the Sustainable Use of Wild South American Camelids "Chayñapampa-San Pedro". Local residents alerted the authorities a few days later. According to Serfor, between 2015 and 2019, 1,203 vicuñas were poached in the country. Caretas, March 29, 2022.²

NORTHERN AFRICA

ALGERIA

Early February 2021

El Bouihi, Tlemcen Province, Algeria. Border with Morocco.

Seizure by border guards of 2 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), a male and a female. Very young, they were both placed under observation.

February 12, 2022; Ennahar, February 13, 2022.¹



WESTERN AFRICA

GUINEA

Early January 2022

Boké Region, Guinea

Seizure of a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) in a village.

Chimpanzee Conservation Center, January 17, 2022.²

LIBERIA

February 24, 2022

Marshall, Margibi County, Liberia

A young chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) arrived safe and sound, but exhausted, at the LCRP. The traffickers who hoped to sell him at a good price escaped prosecution.

Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, February 24, 2022.³



The young chimpanzee can dream of a better future

SIERRA LEONE

January 5, 2022

Freetown, Western Area, Sierra Leone

The 6-month-old baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) had been purchased for 300,000 leones (25 US\$) to be condemned to a pet status. Veterinarians at the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary got "BK" out of the family a year later. He weighed 5.1 kg, had intestinal parasites, a distended abdomen, two alopecia on his head and scars on his body.

Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Jan. 5 and 6, 2022.⁴



After quarantine and treatment, the young chimpanzee is in good general physical condition

Mid-January and Early February 2022

Freetown, Western Area and Outamba Kilimi National Park, North West Province, Sierra Leone



Three bullets were removed from "Ribi's" head. The baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) had been admitted to the Tacugama chimpanzee sanctuary. He had been dropped off by a man who claimed to have found him abandoned by his mother. He had kept the baby in a cage outside his house for a week. A few days later, another baby was rescued, this time in the national park. He was in the hands of poachers. Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, February 2, April 28, and May 4 and 5, 2022.⁵

CAMEROON

March 23, 2022**Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon**

"Bring me my gun! I will kill these animals not to be taken alive from here." A traditional chief was holding 2 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) prisoners in iron cages. In addition to wanting to kill his "toys", the trafficker resisted arrest and tried to intimidate the police. He had bought the young primates in Djoum and tried to sell them in the capital.

EAGLE, March 29, 2022; LAGA, March 2022.⁶

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 5, 2022**Likasi, Haut-Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of a male vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) kept chained to a tree. He was entrusted to the JACK (Young Animals Confiscated in Katanga) shelter.

J.A.C.K. - Jeunes Animaux Confisqués au Katanga, February 11, 2022.⁷

February 7, 2022**Boende, Tshuapa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), an approximately 4-year-old female, who is to be sent to the JACK rehabilitation center in Lubumbashi. This was a joint operation of Conserv Congo, the Environmental Authorities of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bonobo Aid. Adams Cassinga, February 7, 2022; J.A.C.K. - Young Animals Confiscated in Katanga, February 28, 2022.⁸

February 23, 2022**Kasongo, Maniema Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

The 2 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) arrived in the village 7 months ago. They were brought by poachers. Rubin Zakwani, an octogenarian, "took them in." When Conserv Congo and ICCN arrived, one of the 2 was already dead. The second, a 2-year-old female, was suffering from malnutrition and infection. Examinations revealed the presence of rifle bullets in her body, no doubt due to her family being poached for bush meat. Lwiro Primates' veterinarians took care of the orphan and removed the bullets. She died 2 weeks later. Zakwani, given his age, is not arrested but he receives a legal warning. Conserv Congo reminds us that a baby chimpanzee can be sold for 5,000 US\$ on the local market and for 10 times more internationally.

Adams Cassinga, February 24, 2022; Conserv Congo, February 24, 2022; Lwiro Primates, March 1 and 19, 2022.⁹

March 24, 2022**Garamba National Park, Haut-Uélé Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of a juvenile female chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) whose mother was shot by poachers. Entrusted to Lwiro Primates, she is slowly recovering.

Lwiro Primates, March 24, 2022.¹⁰

March 24, 2022**Ituri Province and Komanda, Ituri Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

The young female chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) was living with farmers who kept her tied to a pole with a rope. She had been taken from the wild a year earlier. She is initially taken in by the association Conserv Congo along with a L'Hoest's monkey (*Cercopithecus lhoesti*, Appendix II). She is then brought to the J.A.C.K. shelter where the veterinarians find bullets in her left arm.

J.A.C.K. - Jeunes Animaux Confisqués au Katanga, March 24 and 25, April 1, May 16 and 31, 2022.¹¹

March 2022**Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve, Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Release of 14 orphaned bonobos (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) in the Ekolo ya Bonobo Reserve after a training period of acclimatisation to forest life in the enclosure of Totaka Island. The reserve covers approximately 480 km². Some villagers are supposed to be the guardians of the bonobos. Some of them fear that these newcomers will transmit contagious diseases to humans, and the NGO Les Amis des Bonobos du Congo fears that human populations will transmit contagious diseases to bonobos.

Twelve years ago, a first group of bonobo pioneers was introduced to the reserve. They were the offspring of families broken by trafficking, civil wars and deforestation and were admitted to and cared for at the Lola ya Bonobo (Bonobo Paradise) sanctuary 800 km from Ekolo ya Bonobo Reserve. Friends of Bonobos, April 6, 7, 8 and 9, 2022; Mongabay, April 7, 2022.¹²



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

January 14, 2022

Dolisie, Department of Niari, Republic of the Congo



Conviction of Arly Nzihou and Roussel Moukassa to 2 years of suspended imprisonment and a fine of 200,000 CFA francs (345 US\$) and 300,000 CFA francs (520 US\$) in damages for attempting to sell an 8-month-old mandrill (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) in March 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.130). The Ministry of Forest Economy has appealed. Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage (PALF), January 2022.¹³

February 8, 2022

Lésio-Louna Reserve, Department of Pool, Republic of the Congo

A poacher was arrested in possession of smoked wild boar meat and a gorilla (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I) finger. Pending his transfer to Brazzaville, Jean Le Bouc Bihonda remained at the gendarmerie station in Kinkala because his file was lost. Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), March 2022.¹⁴

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

Early February 2022

Gede, Kilifi County, Kenya

An orphaned baby Syke's monkey (*Cercopithecus albogularis*, Appendix II) was found prostrate next to his dead mother, caught in a trap.



Colobus Conservation, February 14, 2022.¹⁵

UGANDA

January 10, 2022

Kakindo, Western Region, Uganda

Notorious poacher Yafesi Baguma, aged 36, has been arrested for killing 2 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) in the Bugoma Central Forest Reserve. The gruesome discovery was made in September 2021 by a team of Bugoma Forest Conservation Association (BFCA) patrollers. Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) rangers, in collaboration with the police, arrested the individual in his hideout. Three of his accomplices, Isiah Nabassa, aged 27, John Tumuhairwe, aged 22, and Erick Baseka, aged 25, had already been arrested. They will appear before the Public Services, Standards and Wildlife Court, which is responsible for prosecuting the murder of protected species.

Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom leased 5,779 hectares of the 41,144 hectares of Bugoma forest to Hoima Sugar Limited for sugarcane cultivation in August 2016. Environmentalists have since engaged in a legal battle with the kingdom and the National

Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to get the degraded forest restored.

ChimpReports, January 11, 2022; The Independent, January 12, 2022; eTurboNews, January 13, 2022.¹⁶

Early January 2022

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Western Region, Uganda



A mountain gorilla (*Gorilla beringei*, Appendix I) caught in a snare was rescued by Gorilla Doctors. The blackback was anesthetized to facilitate his release, but the 5 silverbacks in the group of about 20 gorillas became too aggressive, forcing Dr. Ricky Okwir Okello and his team to return the next day with reinforcements. They were able to remove the metal collar that was compressing the third, fourth, and fifth fingers of his right hand, treat the wounds with antibiotics, and administer deworming medication, as many apes were victims of parasites. The gorilla woke up safely and was able to rejoin his group.

Gorilla Doctors, January 18, 2022.¹⁷



ZAMBIA

January 7, 2022

Kabwe, Central Province, Zambia

Seizure of a 3 to 4-year-old male vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) who had been illegally held from a young age.

Zambia Primate Project, January 8, 2022.¹⁸

January 13, 2022

Manyinga District, North-Western Province, Zambia

Seizure of 2 baboons (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), a 3-year-old male held for 2 years and a 2-year-old female held for one year.

Zambia Primate Project, January 18 and February 22, 2022.¹⁹



Mid-January 2022
Mayawo Plains, North Western Province, Zambia



© Zambia Primate Project

A 4-month-old female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) seized by the Zambia Primate Project team. A man named Romeo Sitengi was keeping her as a pet.
 Zambia Primate Project, January 21, 2022.²⁰

January 30 to February 6, 2022
Solwezi, North-Western Province, and Mufulira and Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, Zambia

- Gilbert Mukaya was selling a vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II). He was approached by undercover police officers and an appointment was made to proceed with the transaction, worth 2,500 kwacha (140 US\$). But Mukaya never showed up. Instead, he sent a child, Joseph Mwakaya. The vervet was seized and Mwakaya left without legal consequences.

- Seizure from Brian Masauso Mukaya of a vervet monkey held prisoner in a tiny plastic basket since the age of one month.

- Seizure from Jonathan Musenga of 2 young vervet monkeys kept chained with chickens and guinea fowl.

- Seizure from Susen Bwalya seizure of a female chained to a tree.

Zambia Primate Project, February 4, 6, 7 and 9, 2022.²¹



March 2, 2022
Mpongwe District, Copperbelt Province, Zambia

A young female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) is handed over. She is reported to have been tied to a tree and a bicycle for the past 6 months. The Zambia Primate Project's mediation work with the local community has paid off.
 Zambia Primate Project, March 3, 2022.²²

March 21-23, 2022
Petauke, Eastern Province, Zambia



© Sara Ortin/ZPP

The 3-day operation in Eastern Province during which the Zambia Primate Project team travelled 1,500 km resulted in the seizure of a juvenile yellow baboon (*Papio cynocephalus*, Appendix II) kept in chains by Yolamu Tembo and a juvenile female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II), also kept in chains by John Jere.

Zambia Primate Project, March 24, 26 and 27, 2022.²³

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

January 20, 2022
Modimolle, Limpopo Province, South Africa



They were injured and living among the rubbish of "civilisation". Two chacma baboons (*Papio ursinus*, Appendix II) from 2 troops living in an illegal landfill were the victims of traps. The first suffered from a wire snare compressing his cervical vertebrae and jaw. The second, a young female weighing less than 2 kg, had lost the use of her legs. An investigation is underway to find the trapper-polluters.

Prime CREW, February 10, 2022.²⁴



© Prime CREW

January 23, 2022

Letsitele, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A 10-week-old female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) is taken in at the primate rehabilitation centre. The orphan with unknown history was named "Dabney".

The Vervet Forest, January 23, 2022.²⁵

Mid-February 2022

Letsitele, Limpopo Province, South Africa

An orphaned female baby vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) is admitted to the rehabilitation centre. She is now waiting for a surrogate mother. She will then be able to join one of the sanctuary's troops.

The Vervet Forest, February 23, 2022.²⁶



February 19, 2022

Cape Peninsula, Western Cape Province, South Africa

A snared juvenile female chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*, Appendix II) was saved from certain death. The wire snare had cut deeply into her neck. After being anaesthetised and treated with antibiotics, she was successfully released back into her troop.

Independent Online, February 20, 2022; News24, February 22, 2022.²⁷



Dr Simpson had to remove the snare, only a few millimetres from the jugular vein, surgically

February 2022

Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

A young female chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*, Appendix II), chained in an inn, was seized and admitted to the veterinary clinic.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, February 24, 2022.²⁸

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 24, 2022

San Antonio, State of Texas, United States of America

One dead and one sickly ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I) were found in a home on the northeast side of the city. The owner was foiled by a TikTok video that showed the 2 lemurs in a cage. Kristy Lee Arredondo, aged 35, was arrested by the Bexar County Sheriff's Office for animal cruelty. The live lemur was distressed, depressed, lethargic, and malnourished. The dead lemur's remains had been dumped behind the back fence of the property. The dog breeder reportedly tried to treat the injured animal with a canine antibiotic. She had bought the lemurs for 3,000 US\$ from a person she contacted via Facebook.

KSAT12, January 24, 2022.²⁹



February 10, 2022

Woodland, State of California, United States of America



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Elon Musk has an obsession in mind. Through his company Neuralink, he wants to put human brains and digital brains in direct contact without using verbal commands, keyboards, buttons or any other device. All that is needed is to install in the warm-blooded brain a detector of commands that can be heard by the cold-blooded brains of the robots. The matter is not so simple. The human brain is a compact and complex computer, and Musk has chosen to start with rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) imported from South-eastern Asia. Of the first 23 rhesus macaques whose skulls were partly dismantled to facilitate the introduction of the brain chip and its sensors, 15 died or were euthanised. The rest probably went mad. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), which claims 17,000 members in the US, has filed an animal cruelty complaint, and the USDA confirms that it is investigating the intrusive and lethal methods of Neuralink and its partners.

=>

Neuralink denies any accusations of cruelty. The injuries, including finger mutilations, are believed to have been caused mainly by the aggressive behaviour of some of the specimens in the university's menagerie. Neuralink is delivering further details: six monkeys were euthanized by the university's vets following surgical complications and infections after the coin-sized chip was inserted and screwed in place, and two others who survived the procedure were sacrificed to gain "vital" scientific information about their brain tissue.

Neuralink accuses the PCRM of being opposed to animal testing on principle, even though regulations require animal testing prior to human trials, and continues to conduct live research in one of its laboratories in Fremont, California. "We are careful to exclude monkeys who show reluctance to undergo the protocol." Neuralink has also turned to pigs.

Neuralink was due to present the exploits of its brain chip to the public at an event, billed as far-reaching, on October 31. It has been postponed.

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, February 10 and 17 and September 28, 2022; VBS News, February 17, 2022; Interesting Engineering, February 18, 2022; Futurism, September 28, 2022; Charlie Hebdo, November 30, 2022.³⁰

February 18, 2022

Satsuma, State of Florida, United States of America

The ad on www.ExoticAnimalsForSale.net offered a young capuchin monkey (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II) for 9,500 US\$. He was tied up in a trailer with a common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II). A 15-year-old girl and her mother from Alabama travelled about 800 km to buy "Sally" outright, but she severely bit the teenager on the index finger. The seller, Joann Newsberger (75), was arrested in Putnam County and charged with 4 counts. Her captive wildlife license had been revoked in 2016. She was released the same day and issued a summons to appear. Florida Fish and Wildlife seized the monkey. Miami Herald, February 22, 2022.³¹

February 28, 2022

San Diego, State of California, United States of America

Klissman Zavala, David Sotelo and Jennifer Madrigal were sentenced to prison and fined 19,612 US\$. The smugglers had entered the country from Mexico with a baby Mexican spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi vellerosus*, Appendix II) hidden in the centre console of their vehicle. The fourth partner in crime has since died of Covid-19. The monkey has been handed over to Moorpark Zoo.

Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, March 2022.³²



End of March 2022

Lee County, State of Florida, United States of America

A cotton-headed tamarin (*Saguinus oedipus*, Appendix I) was seized from a private home. He had bitten on several occasions an elderly man in the house. The enclosure in which the monkey was kept was not of the required size and the owner did not have all the required documents.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 31, 2022.³³

LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Early January 2022

Temperley, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina



Two tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) were seized from a house. The male and the female are between 25 and 30 years old. They were handed over to the Wild Animal Breeding Station (ECAS).

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, January 11, 2022.³⁴

BRAZIL

March 12, 2022

Bauru, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure from the back seat of a car at the Avai road toll of 2 capuchin monkeys (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp., Appendix II).

G1 Bauru e Marília, March 12, 2022.³⁵

COLOMBIA

Mid-February 2022

El Cerrito, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

A white-faced capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II) is seized from a house. She had been bought from foreigners as a pet for 200,000 pesos (50 US\$). The juvenile female was placed in the Care and Assessment Centre.

Diario Occidente, February 15, 2022.³⁶

End of March 2022
Bogotá, Colombia

Seizure of a squirrel monkey (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II) kept in an apartment as a pet.

Infobae, March 27, 2022.³⁷



FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

Mid-January 2022

Kourou, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France

A tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) is seized from a home. The juvenile monkey purchased in Suriname was tied up on a balcony and wearing a nappy. He was released to regain his freedom and dignity.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.³⁸



February 2022

Bélizon, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France

Two red-faced black spider monkeys (*Ateles paniscus*, Appendix II) killed by poachers. Remains and gun were seized and the perpetrator is being prosecuted.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.³⁹

ECUADOR

January 21, 2022

Sucúa, Morona-Santiago Province, Ecuador

Three years in prison for a man who chained a white-bellied spider monkey (*Ateles belzebuth*, Appendix II) in his house. The sentence also included the publication of a radio message reaffirming the prohibition of owning wild animals. The spider monkey, an adult female weighing approximately 2.5 kg, was transferred to the Bioparc Zoo Amaru in Cuenca.

Ministry of the Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, January 21, 2022.⁴⁰



PERU

February 4, 2022

Moyobamba, Province of Moyobamba, Department of San Martín, Peru

He was only a source of entertainment. The baby capuchin monkey (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp., Appendix II) was seized from a tourist attraction. Not yet weaned, he will be sent to a rescue centre.

Neotropical Primate Conservation, Feb. 5, 2022.⁴¹



So young that he should still be suckling

February 23, 2022

Callao, Province of Callao, Peru

Anaesthesia and exfiltration of a male tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) less than one year old who had been wandering the streets and on the roofs of houses for about 2 days. He was transferred to a Serfor facility.

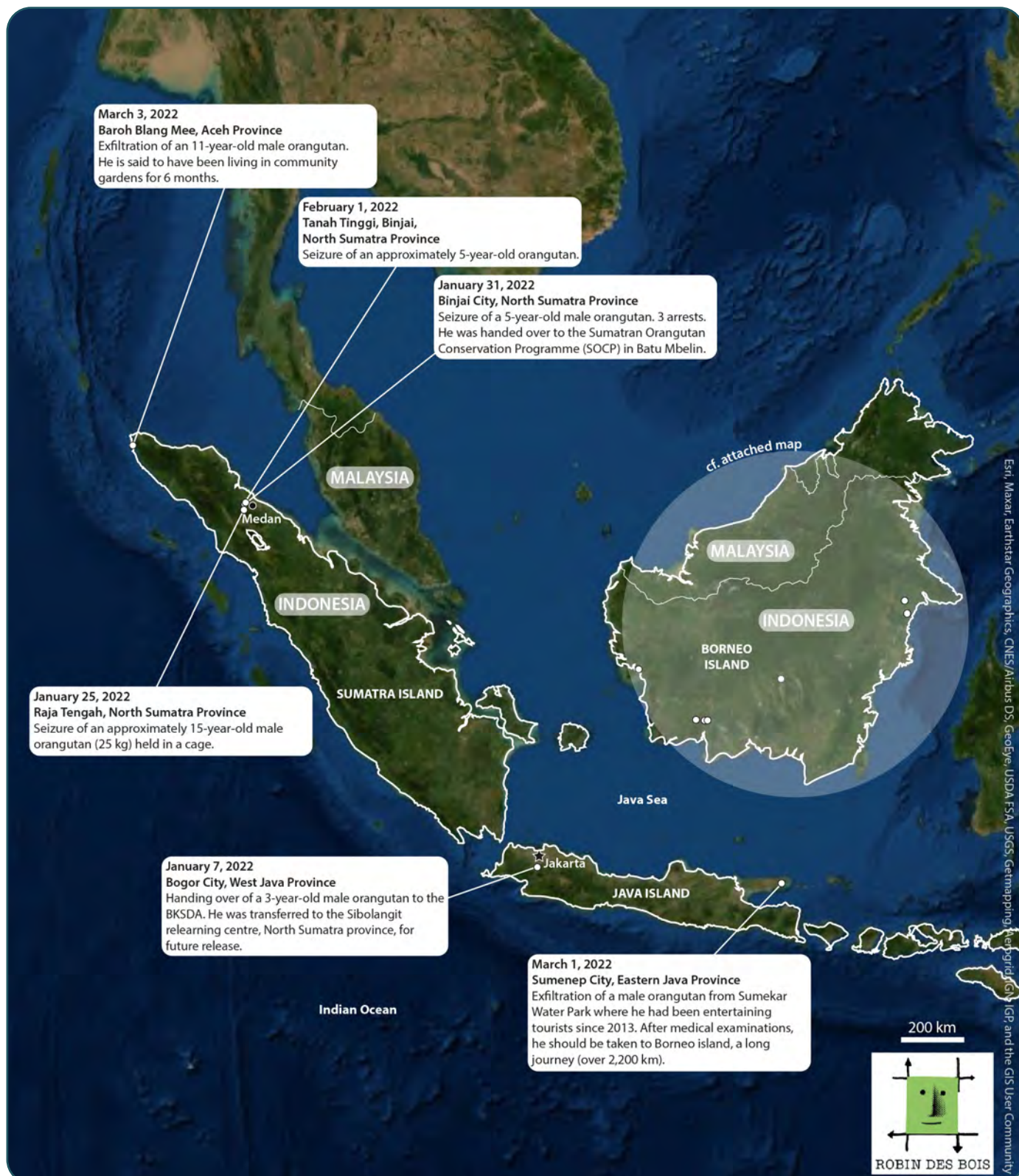
Serfor, February 23, 2022.⁴²



SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA ORANGUTANS

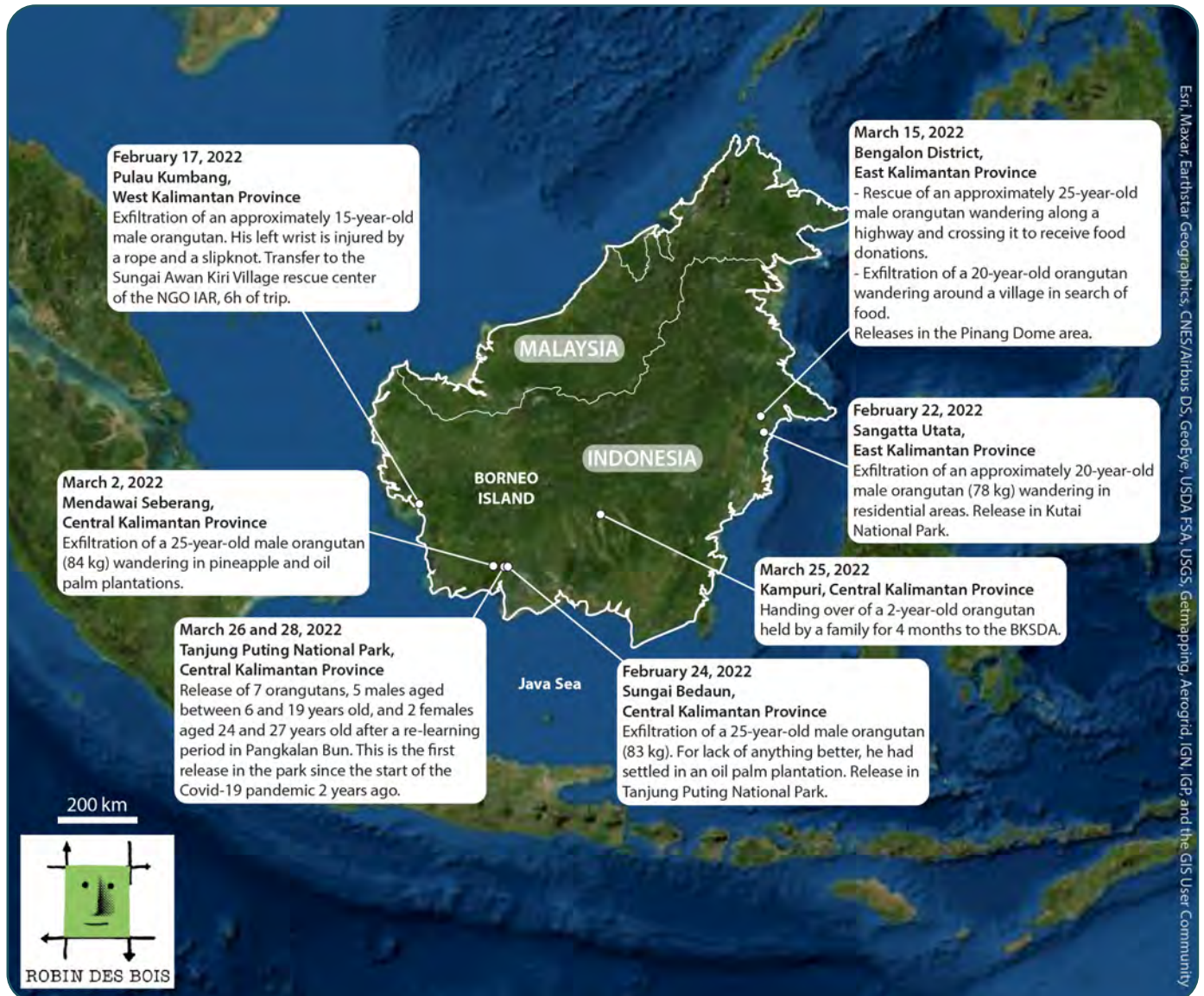
January 1 - March 31, 2022



Orangutan (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I)

Sources: Antara News ; Borneo News ; Cable News Network Indonesia ; Centre for Orangutan Protection ; Digitara.com ; IDN Times Kaltim ; IDN Times Sumut ; iNews ; International Animal Rescue ; Kabar24 ; Klik Samarinda ; Kompas.com ; LensaBanyumas ; Liputan 6 SCTV ; Ministry of Environment and Forestry ; Okzone.com ; Republika ; Scorpion Foundation Indonesia ; Serambi Indonesia Daily ; SINDOnews ; Telisik Indonesia ; Tv One News.

Orangutans in Indonesia - Borneo January 1 - March 31, 2022



January 25, 2022
Raja Tengah, North Sumatra Province



March 28, 2022
Tanjung Puting National Park, Central Kalimantan Province

January 25, 2022

Raja Tengah, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Seizure in the luxurious villa of Terbit Rencana Perangin Angin, prefect of Langkat Regency, of an orangutan, a Sulawesi macaque (*Macaca nigra*, Appendix II), 2 Bali mynas (*Leucopsar rothschildi*, Appendix I), 2 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), and a changeable hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II). Terbit has a

bad reputation. According to the media, in addition to the orangutan, he maintained in his home a sort of penal colony for immigrant workers and ex-drug addicts employed as labourers on an oil palm.



IDN Times Sumut, January 25 and 27, 2022; Kompas.com, January 25, 2022; Tribun-Medan, January 25, 2022; Cable News Network Indonesia, January 26, 2022; Okezone.com, January 27, 2022; Mongabay, January 28 and February 7, 2022; Kuasakata.com, January 30, 2022; Bisnis Sumatra, February 17, 2022.⁴³

February 2022

Penajam North Paser and Kutai Kartanegara Regencies, East Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Indonesia's new administrative and political capital will be built on the island of Borneo, which is considered more stable and less vulnerable to global warming and tsunamis than Jakarta. President Joko Widodo wants a "smart city in the forest" on the other side of the Macassar Strait.

Nusantara will cover more than 250,000 hectares (2,500 km²), 4 times the size of Jakarta and 24 times the size of Paris. The initial budget is 32 million US\$. Samboja Lestari, the rehabilitation centre for orangutans expelled and asphyxiated by fires, extends over 1,850 hectares of restored tropical forest, right where the Nusantara UFO is to land. It is currently home to 120 orangutans. It is run by the NGO BOS (Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation). The foundation has been mentioned extensively in the successive issues of "On the Trail."

Joko Widodo and his ministers are reassuring. "The right-of-way of the new capital is covered with industrial forests. The primary forests will not be destroyed. We will also rehabilitate damaged ecosystems by developing tree nurseries that would produce at least 20 million tree seedlings annually." On February 15, 2022, Widodo appointed Bambang Susantono as mayor of the new capital. This engineer from the Bandung Institute of Technology did part of his studies in California. His deputy is the former director of Sinar Mas Land, Indonesia's largest real estate developer.

No matter what they do or say, the forest-city is scary. During the construction phase, it will concentrate thousands of expatriate workers, produce millions of tonnes of waste, and trigger the expansion of ports and airports. The new arrivals, initially civil servants from Jakarta, will be insensitive to the charms of the clouded leopards, the leopard cats and the crocodiles of Balikpapan Bay unless they are in cages and secure backwaters. The head of development in East Kalimantan, 129,000 km², is ecstatic. "We need East Kalimantan to be bright and sparkling."

Cable News Network, February 21, 2022; Antara News, March 19, 2022.⁴⁴

February 1, 2022

Tanah Tinggi, Binjai City, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

At the Binjai bus station, a white minibus drops off a box and a black minibus comes close to the box. An hour later, 3 men put the box in the black minibus. The police and the NGO Sumeco, who were keeping watch, intervened. Three men are arrested. In the box, there is an orangutan. The white bus came from Medan, 20 km away. To safeguard the investigation, the police are not saying where the black bus was heading.

Digitara.com, February 1, 2022; IDN Times Sumut, February 1, 2022; Kabar24, February 1, 2022; Tv One News, February 1, 2022.⁴⁵

February 2, 2022

Raja Seberang, West Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Children, while fishing for shrimp, retrieved some garbage, palm and wild plant debris and the severed hand of an orangutan in their net. An investigation is underway to find out how it was dumped in the Arut River.

Borneo News, February 3, 2022.⁴⁶

INDONESIA - EXCLUDING ORANGUTANS

Early January 2022

Mount Ciremai National Park, Kuningan, Majalengka and Cirebon Regencies, West Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia



Two slow lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) were released into their natural habitat after being handed over to IAR Indonesia by villagers. International Animal Rescue, January 13, 2022.⁴⁷

January 13, 2022

Medan, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Two long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) had been kept in a house in Polonia village for 3 years. One of them bit the owner who called the Provincial Wildlife Authority (BBKSDA-SU). The monkeys were handed over to the Scorpion Foundation, which put an end to their ordeal by returning them to their natural habitat. Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, January 17, 2022.⁴⁸

January 22, 2022

Medan, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) reduced to captivity for 10 years has been handed over to the Wildlife Authority. Ismet Hasibuan and his wife Suti Herlina Nasution used to shower and even brush the teeth of "Koret", whom they called "their son". Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, January 22, 2022.⁴⁹

March 26, 2022

Gunung Simpang Nature Reserve, Cianjur Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia

Joint operation of BKSDA and IAR Indonesia to release 10 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 5 males and 5 females. They had been seized or handed over during 2021. Portal Bandung Timur, March 26, 2022.⁵⁰

THAILAND

January 13, 2022

Tha Mai Ruak, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

Her lower body paralyzed after being shot, the mother macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) could not give birth naturally. The baby was delivered by an emergency caesarean. "Nam Phon" and "Simba" are saved, but condemned to captivity. Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, January 13 and February 12, 2022.⁵¹



"Simba" will depend on the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand for the rest of his life

February 17, 2022

Phu Kham Chan, Saraburi Province, Thailand

Attracted by cries, local residents went to an abandoned building. They discovered long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) trapped in blue nylon bags in plastic boxes or hanging from a rope. The residents freed most of the macaques, about 100, before alerting the police, who arrived on the scene and seized 29 macaques. Outside the buildings, a young specimen lay dead, apparently killed by a dog bite.

Channel News Asia (with Reuters), February 17, 2022; Mgronline.com, February 17, 2022.⁵²



February 17, 2022
Bangkok, Thailand

Seizure of a baby macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II). Jirakit, thinking he was dealing with a buyer, in fact was talking to an undercover police officer and was arrested.

Siamrath, February 17, 2022.⁵³

March 2, 2022
Thailand

A young male long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) had been held in a very small cage for several months. Stressed and aggressive due to his captivity, the orphan "Boon Chok" will have a chance to regain his natural behaviour with other macaques, but probably not his freedom.

Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, March 2, 2022.⁵⁴



Suffering from behavioural problems, "Boon Chok" bites and constantly jumps up and down

March 7, 2022
Choporo Sub-District, Kra Buri District, Ranong Province, Thailand



Seizure at the checkpoint of 3 baby macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) in bags of rice loaded in a pick-up truck. Arrest of Kob Thaithaworn alias Kiattisak, driver, and his 3 passengers, Nak Sriprom alias Sarayut, Neng Sriprom alias Thichakon, Khai Thongsuk alias Nanthawit. They explain to have bought them 4,000 bahts or 123 US\$ in the District of La-un.

Siamrath, March 7, 2022.⁵⁵

March 16, 2022

Chang Phueak Sub-District, Mueang Chiang Mai District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand

Arrest of Wuttichai Saengsrirachand for keeping a macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) in a cage 1.2 meters long by 1 meter wide and 1.2 meters high in a restaurant parking lot.

Channel 7HD, March 16, 2022.⁵⁶

VIET NAM

January 2, 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

A long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) was seized and entrusted to Cu Chui shelter. He was kept until then chained to a tree.

ENV, January 2, 2022.⁵⁷

January 3, 2022

Son La Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) who was living chained up in a private home.

ENV, January 3, 2022.⁵⁸

Early January 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

Another chained long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) seized by the Forestry Department in collaboration with ENV.

ENV, January 9, 2022.⁵⁹

January 11, 2022

Southern Viet Nam

A 10 kg Northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) was handed over and released in Long Khanh forest, Dong Nai province.

ENV, January 16, 2022.⁶⁰

Early January 2022

Son La Province, Viet Nam

Two Assam macaques (*Macaca assamensis*, Appendix II) spotted in a cage behind a bank are seized and released.

ENV, January 18, 2022.⁶¹

Early February 2022

Ha Nam Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 2 rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) kept in a cage at the entrance of a pagoda. They are transferred to the rescue centre of Cuc Phuong National Park.

ENV, February 15, 2022.⁶²

March 2, 2022

Dong Nai Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a 4 kg Northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) held prisoner outside a burial shop.

ENV, March 2, 2022.⁶³

Early March 2022

Dak Nong Province, Viet Nam

Sentence of the 2 "owners" of 2 gibbons (Hylobatidae, Appendix I) who were held captive on a farm to 12 and 15 months in prison. The prisoners were transferred to the Nam Nung Reserve.

ENV, March 14, 2022.⁶⁴



March 16, 2022

Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam



Seizure of 2 Northern pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) held prisoner in the back of a house.

ENV, March 16, 2022.⁶⁵

March 19, 2022

Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam

Seizure of a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) prisoner in a motorcycle garage.

ENV, March 19, 2022.⁶⁶

March 31, 2022

Dong Thap Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a Northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) from a karaoke bar owner who bought him on the Internet.

ENV, March 31, 2022.⁶⁷

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

January 4, 2022

Behali Reserve Forest, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Five skulls were found. With one bone, this is all that was left of capped langurs (*Trachypithecus pileatus*, Appendix I). The carnivorous tribes of the Arunachal border area are suspected. The tails and skins of these monkeys are used to decorate their traditional sheaths.

The Times of India, January 9, 2022; Northeast Now, January 9, 2022.⁶⁸

January 23, 2022

Nedungur, Tiruchirappalli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

It was carnage. Twenty-four monkeys (species unspecified), 18 males and 6 females aged 2 years, were found dead. They were allegedly caught and asphyxiated elsewhere and their bodies were then dumped on a wasteland near the highway. The carcasses of the 24 animals were buried in the forest reserve.

The Hindu, January 23, 2022; The Times of India, January 24, 2022.⁶⁹

February 7 and 13, 2022

Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Kanchipuram District, and Kolathur, Chennai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Disaster at the careless zoo: after the death of a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) and a dozen ostriches (genus *Struthio*), 2 male common squirrel monkeys (*Saimiri sciureus*, Appendix II) were stolen.



A zoo employee, S. Sathyavel (34), had organized the extraction with his accomplice, D. Janakiraman (21), and sold the 2 monkeys for 400,000 rupees (5,329 US\$) to Vinoth (29), a pet shop owner. They were arrested, along with a fourth trafficker, Loganathan (21).

The Times of India, February 11 and 14, 2022; Meeri News, February 13, 2022.⁷⁰

WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

January 1, 2022

Thoiry Zoo, Department of Yvelines, and Lumigny-Nesles-Ormeaux Big Cat Park, Department of Seine-et-Marne, France

In France's most famous zoo, 60 km from Paris, hooded thieves broke into the zoo on New Year's Eve, cut through the fence of the pigmy marmoset (*Callithrix pygmaea*, Appendix II) enclosure, stole 4 specimens, discarded one in the bushes - he was found 3 days later -, robbed the treat dispensers in the catering hall and left after 2 hours, as reported by the video tapes of the surveillance cameras.

After the fatal poaching of Vince the rhinoceros, whose nasal horn was cut off in the night of March 6 to 7, 2017 (see "On the Trail" n°16 p.72) - the perpetrators of the crime have not been found - and after the so-called reinforcement of security and reactivity measures implemented by the zoo's management, the affair of the 3 abducted marmosets, knee-high to a grasshopper, weighing about a hundred grams and worth between 3,500 and 5,000 € (3,900 and 5,700 US\$) each, caused a great deal of commotion within the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria and above all in police and legal circles. The OCLAESP (Central Office against infringements on environment and public health) and 2 gendarmerie brigades were mobilised. One week after the abduction, 2 men under the cover of a false identity handed over 3 marmosets to the Lumigny-Nesles-Ormeaux big cat park. They claimed to have found them in a deserted house. In fact, the marmosets were from Thoiry.

78actu, April 22, 2022; Le Parisien, April 22, 2022.⁷¹

Early January 2022

Mons-en-Pévèle, Department of Nord, France

Two marmosets (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 flying squirrels were stowaways at an equestrian centre. The former son-in-law of the centre's director claimed to have "legally purchased" the monkeys in Germany, without any certificate or guarantee that they had not been taken from their natural environment. Photos of the defendant showing him with macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) or capuchin monkeys (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II) were also found in his phone. The monkeys were confiscated and he will have to pay a fine of 800 € (905 US\$).

La Voix du Nord, January 8, 2022.⁷²



January 13, 2022

Alençon, Department of Orne, France

In September 2017 in Saint-Julien-sur-Sarthe, a 55-year-old woman had recovered 2 common squirrel monkeys (*Saimiri sciureus*, Appendix II) from a deceased friend. There was no certificate of capacity or prefectural authorizations for transport. The 2 monkeys, who had previously passed through the Labenne Zoo in the southwest of France, were taken away from the woman 2 months after their arrival at her home. The deputy prosecutor required against the defendant already prosecuted for the same offenses in 2014, 1,500 € (1,700 US\$) suspended fine. The court found her guilty, but exempted her from punishment considering that the animals had already been taken away from her. L'Orne Hebdo, January 14, 2022.⁷³



January 25, 2022

Department of Puy-de-Dôme, France

A 20-month-old female common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) was abandoned in front of a veterinary clinic. In poor health, she was entrusted to the La Tanière Zoo and Refuge. La Tanière, January 28, 2022.⁷⁴

EASTERN EUROPE

RUSSIA

February 4, 2022

Federal City of Saint Petersburg, Russia

The 2 online advertisements selling 2 mangabeys (*Cercocebus* spp., Appendix I or II) at the prices of 50,000 and 200,000 rubles (640 and 2,570 US\$) are prohibited by court decision. The judge considered that the advertisements "contained information about activities endangering the natural environment."

Fontanka.Ru, February 4, 2022; Moskovski Komsomolets Saint Petersburg, February 4, 2022.⁷⁵

Mid-March 2022

Penovsky District, Tver Oblast, Russia

Six Internet sites selling lemurs (Lemuridae, Appendix I), New World monkeys (Cebidae, Appendix I or II) and Old World monkeys (family Cercopithecidae) are shut down by a court decision. Afanasy-Business, March 18, 2022.⁷⁶

ARMADILLOS, CAPYBARAS, PACAS, COATIS, PECCARIES AND AGOUTIS



Nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*). Photo William Wimley

AMERICA

BRAZIL

January 15, 2022

Cajati, São Paulo State, Brazil

Armadillo tails (family Dasypodidae) and capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) meat were seized from the residence of a hunter, along with weapons, ammunition and other hunting accessories. The man was fined 6,700 reais (1,190 US\$) and had to pay a bail of 1,200 reais (213 US\$) for his release.

G1 Santos, January 16, 2022.¹



February 13, 2022

Planaltina, Federal District, Brazil

The poacher of an armadillo (family Dasypodidae) was arrested. He was accompanied by 3 dogs. A machete, 2 torches and hunting gear were also seized.

Correio Braziliense, February 14, 2022.²

March 6, 2022

Quaraí, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Seizure of 22 capybara carcasses (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), 2 rifles, ammunition, knives, and phones. Arrest of 3 poachers.

Portal de Camaquã, March 27, 2022.³

March 9, 2022

Jacupiranga, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure in the freezer of an individual of a nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) weighing 3 kg and a common big-eared opossum (*Didelphis aurita*) weighing 1.3 kg. Additional seizure of 2 shotguns, a revolver, ammunition, and cartridges. Fine of 2,150 reais (460 US\$).

Portal da Cidade Registro, March 11, 2022.⁴



March 11, 2022

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

Seizure of a dead armadillo (family Dasypodidae) during a roadside check. The driver explains that he "picked up" the animal on the highway as a dinner treat after the car in front of him ran him over.

G1 MA, March 15, 2022.⁵



OPERATION FAUNA VIVA

March 25, 2022

Sooretama Reserve, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

Report from 8 searches:

- Seizure of an armadillo (family Dasypodidae) and arrest of a 39-year-old man.
- Seizure of 2 armadillos, a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), 2 dead bear-faced curassows (*Crax fasciolata*), firearms, and ammunition. Arrest of a 46-year-old man.

G1 ES, March 26, 2022.⁶

March 29, 2022

Santa Lúcia do Piaí, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



Seizure by the 3rd Environmental Battalion of the Brigada Militar of 4 coati carcasses (genus *Nasua*) weighing a total of 8 kg along with 5 rifles, ammunition, knives, and cash. Two men aged 36 and 60 were arrested.

Rádio Solaris, March 30, 2022.⁷

OPERATION IMPACTO NOS RIOS

March 30th, 2022

Soare, Marajó Island, State of Pará, Brazil

Dismantling in the heart of the forest of a clandestine slaughterhouse and seizure of 8 dead animals, 1,500 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), 60 bags of salt, cartridges, a gas cylinder, and a boat engine. The meat was incinerated on the spot. A few days later, 500 kg of already salted capybara meat was seized from a boat named *Deus é quem me guia* (God is my guide). The owner was arrested.

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, capybara meat has become an alternative to buffalo meat, the specialty of the Island of Marajó.

Roma News, March 31, 2022; O Globo, April 8, 2022.⁸

FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

January 2022

Iracoubo, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France

Seizure of a white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II) leg. It had been purchased without an invoice at the Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni market. The meat was destroyed.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.⁹



PERU

February 28, 2022

San Lorenzo, Province of Jaén, Department of Cajamarca, Peru



Four public entertainers central American agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III in Honduras) were seized from the "Laguna del Paiche" tourist leisure park.

Serfor, February 28, 2022.¹⁰

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Early February 2022

Kalkaska County, State of Michigan, United States of America

Seizure of the fur of a North American river otter (*Lontra canadensis*, Appendix II). The poacher admitted that he had bought a permit afterwards to conceal his crime.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, February 5, 2022.¹

ASIA

THAILAND

March 28, 2022

Khuha Tai Sub-district, Rattaphum District, Songkhla Province, Thailand

Arrest of Thaweesak, aged 34, in possession of 2 small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I) so "cute" that he had no doubt that he would sell them for at least 3,000 baht (92 US\$) each. Siamrath, March 28, 2022.²

VIET NAM

January 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam



Transfer to the Cu Chui Refuge of a small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I) that an ENV supporter bought in order to entrust him to the association. ENV reminds that one should not buy wildlife even if the motives are good. The money collected finances illegal networks. ENV, January 24, 2022.³

March 25, 2022

Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam

Save Vietnam's Wildlife, Cuc Phuong National Park and the Department of Forest Protection took in 2 small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I) just over a month old. They are starving and dehydrated. SVW, March 25, 2022.⁴

EUROPE

HUNGARY

January 28, 2022

Nagybajom, Somogy County, Hungary

Arrest of a 32-year-old woman from Pécs (Baranya County, 90 km away) who was trying to sell a stuffed common otter (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I). She had posted the ad on social networks.

Hungarian Police, January 29, 2022.⁵

MONTENEGRO

January 16, 2022

Žabljak, Municipality of Žabljak, Montenegro



A common otter (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I) had been straying around the town for several days. The first picture aroused such interest that many photographers and video makers went after him. Subsequent photos and videos showed the otter becoming increasingly frightened by humans. The story ended badly. His lifeless body was found. He bears no injuries, but intentional poisoning is being suggested. Toxicological analyses are ongoing.

Vijesti, January 16 and 17, 2022.⁶

February 26, 2022

Rijeci Crnojevića, Municipality of Cetinje, Montenegro

Discovery of a dead common otter (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I) put prominently, high up, between 2 tree branches. The association Living Green points out that "many fishermen think that the otters are their enemies, that they take away their catch, but they only eat one fish a day."

Vijesti, February 26, 2022; PCNEN, February 28, 2022.⁷

UNITED KINGDOM

January 24, 2022

Carron Valley Forest, North Lanarkshire Council, Scotland, United Kingdom.

The body of a baby common otter (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I), victim of a trap, was found near Kilsyth. The police have launched an appeal for witnesses.

GlasgowWorld, February 2, 2022.⁸



CZECHIA

February 14, 2022

Between Kokšín and Švihov, Plzeň Region, Czechia

Two dead common otters (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I), one adult and one juvenile, are found on the bank of a stream. Poisoning is suspected.

Deník, February 15, 2022.⁹



March 28, 2022

Komarice, South Bohemian Region, Czechia

The method differs, the result is the same. Two common otters (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I) were shot dead. A man walking his dog found their carcasses, one in the water, the other in the reeds, and informed the police. The death occurred 2 or 3 weeks ago. The ecological damage is estimated to be worth 90,000 crowns (4,000 US\$).

Deník, March 31, 2022; TV Nova, April 1, 2022.¹⁰

OTHER MAMMALS

AFRICA

KENYA

February 5, 2022

Naivasha, Nakuru County, Kenya

A hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) caught in a trap had been tied to a tree for over 48 hours. Despite all the care of the veterinarians, he died 2 days later of starvation and hyperthermia.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, February 2022.¹



NIGERIA

End of March 2022

Bajimba, Taraba State, Nigeria

They were 14. They came from Ardo Kola, Karim Lamido, and Gassol. They got close a hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) in the night, shot him, dragged his body into the forest and shared the meat among themselves. They were reported and are now on the run.

The Punch, March 31, 2022.²

AMERICA

PERU

March 8, 2022

Chiclayo, Province of Chiclayo, Department of Lambayeque, Peru

A client got out of the cab and left behind a cage with a juvenile kinkajou (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras) who had been abused. The animal received first aid before being transferred to a shelter. Serfor, March 8, 2022.³



ASIA

INDIA

February 15, March 8 and 9, 2022

Kolkata, Kolkata District; Nepalgunge, South 24 Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India

Srabanti Chatterjee is indicted after posting pictures of herself with a chained mongoose (*Herpestes* spp., Appendix III in India) on social media. The Bengali actress' driver was questioned. Bharat Haat was continuously keeping the mongoose captive. India Today, February 27, 2022; Hindustan Times, March 9, 2022; The Times of India, March 15, 2022.⁴



Animal abuse and nationalism: the starlet Srabanti Chatterjee ran unsuccessfully in the 2021 legislative elections on the BJP ticket before leaving the party.

March 12, 2022

Pakhriguri, Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India

A sub-adult male red kangaroo (*Osphranter rufus*) was found hidden behind a tarpaulin in a truck during a routine check. The crooks had smuggled him from Myanmar. Javed Sheikh and Imran Sheikh were arrested and the Australian marsupial was sent to Alipore Zoo in Calcutta.

The Telegraph India, March 14 and 16, 2022.⁵



The exhausted animal will be on a fruit-based diet

INDONESIA

January 2022

Gorontalo Province, Sulawesi Island, Indonesia

Two rescued Sulawesi bear cuscus (*Ailurops ursinus*) have been released into a park. Accustomed to the treetops, the marsupials, a female and her child, had been confined on the ground as pets by miners. New Straits Times, January 31, 2022.⁶



Sulawesi bear cuscus (*Ailurops ursinus*)

MONGOLIA

January to February 2022

Töv Aimag, Mongolia

Arrest of 6 individuals in possession of 26 marmot carcasses.

There are 2 species of marmots in Mongolia, the Tarbagan marmot (*Marmota sibirica*) and the grey marmot (*Marmota baibacina*). Tarbagan marmots are considered threatened by the IUCN. They are found only in Mongolia and, very rarely, in Russia. In 2001, the population was estimated at 5 million individuals, compared to 40 million in 1940, which is a decline of more than 85%. Large numbers of them are killed for their meat and skins. The grey marmots, or Altai marmots, have a slightly wider range, but they too are intensively hunted for their meat and for traditional local medicine.

Marmot hunting was banned in August 2021 throughout the country for 3 years.

Eagle News, August 4, 2021 and February 25, 2022.⁷



Tarbagan marmot (*Marmota sibirica*). Photo Attila Steiner

NEPAL

February 25, 2022

Rapti, Dang District, Lumbini Province, Nepal

Seizure of 5 red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) skins during a check on the Bhaluwang-Pyuthan road. Ram Bahadur Thapa (32), Rupak Khadka (20) and Ram Kumar Pun Magar (19) from Rolpa were arrested. The smugglers had obtained the furs in the Himalayas and were about to sell them. Of the 10,000 red pandas in the world, 1,000 are in Nepal. Khabarhub, February 26, 2022; The Kathmandu Post, March 27, 2022.⁸



Poachers and/or smugglers?

VIET NAM

January 4th, 2022

Cam Lo, Quang Tri Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 8 live Asian palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India) hidden in the trunk of the vehicle of Truong Nhu Phong, aged 42. Giáo dục và Thời đại, January 5, 2022.⁹

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

Early March 2022

Newport, Wales, United Kingdom

Two property developers in Merthyr Tydfil have been fined 2,000 £ (2,680 US\$). The concrete builders had damaged a bat resting place during construction without planning permission and without considering compensatory measures.

National Wildlife Crime Unit, March 8, 2022.¹⁰



March 27, 2022

Farnworth, Greater Manchester County, England, United Kingdom

A European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) survives a glue trap originally intended for rodents. He was freed by trimming around some of his spines. A bill to make it an offense to use glue traps is currently under discussion in the Parliament.

Manchester Evening News, March 31, 2022.¹¹



RUSSIA

March 21, 2022

Federal City of Saint Petersburg, Russia

Three porcupines were displayed in a shop. When he saw the Rosprirodnadzor inspectors arrive, the owner claimed that they were crested porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*) that he had purchased in 2018. Summoned zoological experts established that they were actually Indian crested porcupines (*Hystrix indica*), listed in the Red Book. Their possession is prohibited without a permit.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 21, 2022; MR7, March 21, 2022.¹²



Red-breasted goose (*Branta ruficollis*). Photo Vyacheslav Luzanov

NORTHERN AFRICA

MOROCCO

Early February 2022

Youssoufia, Marrakech-Safi Region, Morocco

Seizure of 4 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) estimated to be worth 30,000 to 40,000 dirhams per specimen (3,180 to 4,240 US\$) on the local market. The poacher is brought in for questioning. Chichaouaalyaoum, February 9, 2022.¹

TUNISIA

January 6, 2022

Remada Delegation, Governorate of Tataouine, Tunisia. Border with Libya.

Seizure by the customs guard of Meguisem of 2 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) fitted with GPS trackers belonging to Qatari poachers who specialize in hunting houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I).

Kapitalis, January 8 and 10, 2022.²



February 16, 2022

Regueb, Governorate of Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia

Seizure of 420 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) transported in wooden cages inside a car from the south of the country.

Tunisian Customs, February 16, 2022.³

WESTERN AFRICA

GUINEA-BISSAU

January 2022

Guinea-Bissau



Since the fatal poisoning of 2,000 hooded vultures in October 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.113), there has been a series of poisoning events, although with fewer victims. The last one killed 50 vultures (Accipitridae, Appendix I or II). The Vulture Conservation Foundation and the authorities agree that the motivation of the poachers is purely economic. Vulture parts sell well. Those responsible for the deaths of the 2,000 hooded vultures have not been prosecuted, but in 2021 a suspect was sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined 850,000 CFA francs (1,500 US\$).

The vultures present in Guinea-Bissau are the hooded vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*, Appendix II), the lappet-faced vulture (*Torgos tracheliotos*, Appendix II), the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II), the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*, Appendix II), and the Rüppell's vulture (*Gyps rueppelli*, Appendix II).

Vulture Conservation Foundation, May 30, 2022.⁴

February 23, 2022

Bissau, Guinea-Bissau

Dismembered and sold off individually by fetishism. Two traders were arrested for selling body parts of poisoned vultures (*Accipitridae*, Appendix I or II) at Bandim market. The parts were hidden in the horns of other animals. The heads were sold for 15,000 CFA francs (25 US\$) and the talons for 10,000 CFA francs (17 US\$). 29% of African vulture deaths are connected to beliefs.

BirdLife, March 1, 2022; Organização para a Defesa e Desenvolvimento das Zonas Húmidas, March 2, 2022.⁵

NIGER

Early January 2022

Niamey, Niamey Urban Community, Niger

Seizure of 6 juvenile ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries) in a crate in the back of a car bound for Lome, Togo.

AIRCOP, January 4 and 5, 2022.⁶

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

February 26, 2022

Douala-Edéa National Park, Littoral Region, and Limbe, South-West Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 8 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) from traffickers at a checkpoint. They have been ringed and transferred to the wildlife centre.

Limbe Wildlife Centre, February 26, 2022.⁷

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 9 and March 24, 2022

Oyo, Department of Cuvette, Republic of the Congo

Fabrice Destin Ngatsongo Motsabéka is sentenced to 2 years in prison, fined 100,000 CFA francs (170 US\$) and ordered to pay 500,000 CFA francs (850 US\$) in damages. The notorious trafficker had caught 84 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) in the vicinity of Mossaka. He had locked them in plastic jugs and transported them by canoe over a hundred kilometres on the Congo and Alima rivers. He wanted to sell them. About 10 of them died during the journey.

EAGLE, February 12, 2022; First Médiac, February 15, 2022; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), February and March 2022; Agence d'information d'Afrique centrale, March 31, 2022.⁸



EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

January 18, 2022

Lake Bogoria, Baringo County, Kenya

Two ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries) were found with an arrow, probably poisoned, one in the neck and the other in the abdomen. They were treated and the prognosis is favourable.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, January 2022.⁹



February 1, 2022

Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Ecosystem, Kenya

Seizure of 6 kg of ostrich meat (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries). The butcher has disappeared.

Big Life Foundation, February 2022.¹⁰

SOUTHERN AFRICA

NAMIBIA

February 6, 2022

Ondangwa, Oshana Region, Namibia

Arrest of Thomas Kondjeni. He was carrying a flamingo carcass (*Phoeniconaias minor* or *Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II). His rifle and shotgun were seized.

Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia, February 25, 2022.¹¹

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Early January 2022

Hillsborough County, State of Florida, United States of America

A red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*, Appendix II) shot at the back of a house. The owner blamed it for eating his chickens. He was summoned to appear.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, January 6, 2022.¹²

January 9, 2022

Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa, United States of America

A bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II) with severe gunshot wounds was found on the bank of the Cedar River. The bird of prey had to be finished off. The authorities are offering a reward for any useful information.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources, February 3, 2022.¹³

January 21, 2022

San Diego, State of California, United States of America

A cry let the cat out of the bag. At the border crossing in San Ysidro in June 2021, the 22 yellow-crowned amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II) hidden in the front door of the vehicle showed their presence. The driver, Evangelina Amaro, had received 500 US\$ to smuggle them from Mexico. The parrots were sent to New York for quarantine and Amaro was sentenced to a five-year term of probation. Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, January-February 2022.¹⁴



January 25 and 27, 2022

Great Falls, State of Montana, United States of America

Preston Jay Spotted Eagle (30), of Browning, appeared before the judges on charges of theft, injury or depredation to government property and violation of the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) and Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II) Protection Act. He pleaded not guilty and was released pending further proceedings.

US Department of Justice, January 28, 2022.¹⁵

January 26, 2022

Gray County, State of Kansas, United States of America



A sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*, Appendix II) shot on a property southeast of Cimarron, near the intersection of County Road S and County Road 21. Gray County Game Warden asks for help in locating those responsible. Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, January 27, 2022.¹⁶

January 2022

Lane County, State of Oregon, United States of America

A Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*, Appendix II) succumbed to its injuries at the Cascades Raptor Centre. It had been shot by a man who blamed him for having killed quails. The shooter was summoned to appear.

Oregon State Police, January 2022.¹⁷

End of January 2022

Putnam County, State of Florida, United States of America

A sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*, Appendix I or II) shot dead. The shooter tried to make it look like he had shot a crow. The fibber was summoned.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, January 27, 2022.¹⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 16, 2022

Shreveport, State of Louisiana, United States of America



Unmasked by the feather of the eagle he had riddled with bullets. Daniel Glenn Smith (20) was sentenced to 30 days in prison and a year's supervised release for possession of a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II) feather. The Homer resident was uncovered by a photo of him displaying the eagle. He is banned from possessing a firearm for one year following hunting offenses involving other wildlife species.

US Department of Justice, February 16, 2022.¹⁹

End of February 2022

Hamilton County, State of Florida, United States of America

Two hawks (*Accipitridae*, Appendix I or II) shot and thrown into the fire. The incendiary killer has confessed.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 3, 2022.²⁰

End of February 2022

Aurora, State of Illinois, United States of America

Rescue of a Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*, Appendix II) with a gunshot wound on its wing.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, February 28, 2022.²¹

Early March 2022

Lake City, State of Florida, United States of America

Two red-shouldered hawks (*Buteo lineatus*, Appendix II) shot with a 12-gauge shotgun. The killer justified his act by arguing that the hawks had killed his chickens.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 10, 2022.²²

Early March 2022

Clinton County, State of Illinois, United States of America

The bar gets bigger, the birds pay the price. The recently installed glass enclosure outside a bar has taken a heavy toll on owls (*Strigiformes*, Appendix I or II) and other birds that crashed into the invisible wall. Customers who found the raptors on the ground take them home for stuffing.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, March 15, 2022.²³

March 8, 2022

Columbus Port of Entry, State of New Mexico, United States of America. Border with Mexico.

Not only drugs, cash and ammunition are found at the borders. Two lilac-crowned amazons (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I) hidden in a shoebox in a car were seized. The driver was fined 300 US\$. The parrots were handed over to the veterinary services.

US Customs and Border Protection, March 11, 2022.²⁴



March 2022

Mackinac County, State of Michigan, United States of America

An eagle (*Accipitridae*, Appendix I or II) trapped in a cable snare for 4 days is released at last. On the spot, several other cable snares, a trail camera and a fox trapped near a deer carcass. He was also released.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, April 2, 2022.²⁵



March 30, 2022

Paso del Norte Port of Entry, State of Texas, United States of America. Border with Mexico.

Seizure of 5 green-cheeked amazons (*Amazona viridigenalis*, Appendix I) hidden in a shoebox in a vehicle with 2 passengers from Mexico. The parrots were handed over to the veterinary services.

US Customs and Border Protection, April 4, 2022.²⁶



LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ARGENTINA

January 12, 2022

RN95, Santa Fe Province, Argentina



100 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) were seized by the gendarmes at kilometre 1,070 of the National Road 95. The 2 men who were transporting them in the trunk of their car from Roque Sáenz Peña, Chaco province, to To-stado, Santa Fe province, were charged with violation of Law

22.421 on the Conservation of Flora and Fauna and Law 14.346 on Animal Abuse and Cruelty. The amazons were taken to the municipal zoo to receive the necessary care before possible reintegration into their natural habitat.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, January 12, 2022.²⁷

End of January 2022

San Genaro, Province of Santa Fe, Argentina

Seizure of 577 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) by road safety officers from a truck that was traveling on National Road 34. 23 others were found lifeless. The man and woman who were transporting them in 13 cages were arrested for violating Law 22.421 on the Conservation of Wild Flora and Fauna and Provincial Law 4.830. The officials handed the birds over to the provincial ecological police.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, January 24, 2022.²⁸

End of January 2022

El Cóndor, Province of Río Negro, Argentina

Seizure of 11 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) from a campsite. The tourist who was keeping them, from Wilde in the province of Buenos Aires, will be prosecuted.

Noticiasnet.com.ar, January 30, 2022.²⁹

BOLIVIA

Early March 2022

Cochabamba, Province of Cercado, Department of Cochabamba, Bolivia

Seizure of 8 parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II) and 6 bare-faced ground doves (*Metriopelia ceciliae*) being sold in the municipal market La Pampa. Elvis Gutiérrez, director of the environment of the City Council of Cochabamba says he is determined to combat the wildlife trade.

El Diario, March 5, 2022.³⁰

1,985 birds seized in Brazil between January 1 and March 31, 2022 according to official and media sources



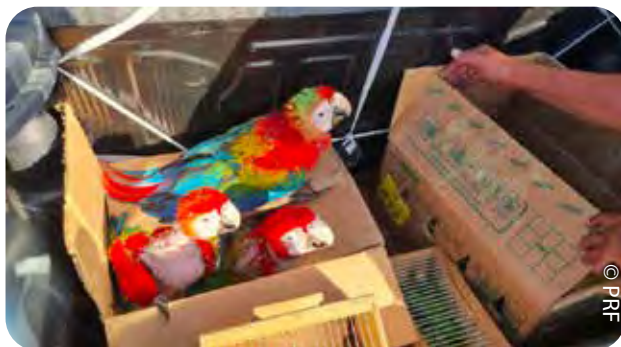
Sources: Agência GBC ; BHAZ ; Correio Braziliense ; Diário de Pernambuco ; G1 ; Gazeta de Alagoas Online ; iBahia.com ; Jornal Dia a Dia ; Leouve ; Marília Notícia ; Midiamax ; Military Police of the Federal District ; ND Mais ; O Povo ; Policiamento Inteligente ; Portal Caparaó ; Portal OCorreio ; São Carlos Agora ; Secretariat of Public Safety and Social Defense of Ceara ; Sistema Brasileiro do Agronegócio ; State News Agency of the State of Paraná ; Tribuna do Interior ; Vitória da Conquista City Hall ; Zap Catalão.



A blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). January 14, 2022. Barra da Tijuca, Rio de Janeiro, State of Rio de Janeiro



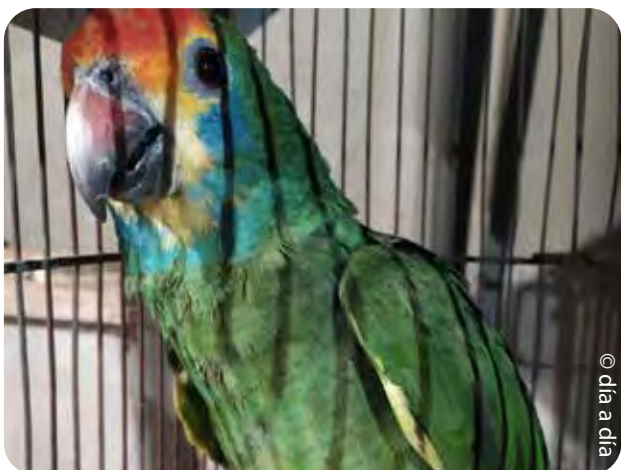
32 birds including 5 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). February 21, 2022. Samambaia, Brasília - Federal District



21 birds including 10 green-winged macaws (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II). February 6, 2022. Umirim, State of Ceará



13 green winged saltators (*Saltator similis*) and double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*). February 21, 2022. Pirai, State of Rio de Janeiro



A red-topped Amazon (*Amazona rhodocorytha*, Appendix I). February 24, 2022. Dorcas do Rio, Preto, State of Espírito Santo



172 birds, including plain parakeets (*Brotogeris tirica*, Appendix II) and jandaya conures (*Aratinga jandaya*, Appendix II). March 20, 2022. Fortaleza, State of Ceará

February 7, 2022

Várzea Grande, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure of 226 eggs of unidentified species in 4 postal parcels. The X-rays attracted the attention of the postal agents who alerted the military police. G1 MT, February 8, 2022.³¹

Early March 2022

São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil

The sentence of a bird trafficker to 3 years of community service and a fine equal to 10 minimum wages of 1,212 reais (215 US\$) is being upheld on appeal. He was convicted for the possession, trade, and mistreatment of 110 birds. These included 65 rusty-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila collaris*), 16 green winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), 10 white-browed meadowlarks (*Leistes supercilialis*), 9 grey pileated finches (*Coryphospingus pileatus*), 5 red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), 2 ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanoloxia brissonii*), 2 rufous-collared sparrows (*Zonotrichia capensis*), and one sayaca tanager (*Thraupis sayaca*). 44 died after being transferred to a care center.

Olhar Animal, March 4, 2022.³²



COLOMBIA

February 28, 2022

Cali, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Seizure of 2 blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and a yellow-crowned amazon (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II) in the Alameda area. They were transferred to the headquarters of the environmental authority in Hogar de Paso. Mayor's Office of Santiago de Cali, February 28, 2022.³³

Mid-March 2022

Obando, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Seizure at the Obando checkpoint of 6 yellow-crowned amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II) and a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) concealed in a cardboard box in the driver's cabin of a bus coming from the department of Cesar. The parrots were thirsty and their feathers had been cut off. They are entrusted to a rescue centre.

Noticiero 90 Minutos, March 18, 2022.³⁴



End of March 2022

Near La Herradura Checkpoint, Department of Quindío, Colombia



Four greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*, Appendix II) were found on the side of the road. Tied up with tape, they had been abandoned while approaching the checkpoint. They were handed over to a rescue centre.

La Crónica del Quindío, March 24, 2022.³⁵

FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

Early 2022

Roura, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France



"Cocotte", a female scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) kept in a cage for almost 40 years, was taken from the wild following an injury caused by hunters. It was transferred to the aviary of a care centre where it will be with other birds.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.³⁶

MEXICO

End of January 2022

Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, Mexico

Near the Tianguis del Baratillo flea market, 6 Mexican woodnymphs (*Thalurania ridgwayi*, Appendix II), an orange-fronted conure (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II) and 5 budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) were dumped near the intersection of Porfirio Díaz and José Luis Mora. They were transferred to Villa Fantasia Zoo. Two dogs, a chihuahua and a shih tzu, were also rescued. El Occidental, January 30, 2022.³⁷

January 31, 2022

Mexico City, Mexico

The agents of the Federal Prosecutor for the Protection of the Environment (Profepa) seized 10 songbirds and ornamental birds that were illegally being sold in a store of the "Central de Abasto," the main wholesale market of the capital. The Northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), the 2 amazons (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), the 4 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), and the 3 Northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) were transferred to a Wildlife Conservation Management Unit (UMA-Unidades de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre). XeVT, January 31, 2022.³⁸

February 8, 2022

San Andrés Tuxtla, State of Veracruz, Mexico



Seizure of 20 toucans (family Ramphastidae) and arrest of Allen "N" and Miguel "N" who were transporting them in a van heading to Santiago Tuxtla. The birds were hidden in fabric pieces. One of them died during the transport. The others were entrusted to specialists in charge of the reintroduction of scarlet macaws in the Los Tuxtlá Biosphere Reserve. Unfortunately, the toucans were made thinner and stressed by the poaching and the transport so in spite of the care, only 6 survived and were released in the biosphere 15 days later. E-consulta Veracruz, February 8, 2022; Milenio, March 24, 2022.³⁹

End of March 2022

Merida, State of Yucatán, Mexico

Release of 8 white-fronted amazons (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II) in the Anikabil archaeological park. Rescued from wildlife trafficking, they underwent 2 years of rehabilitation in the UMA of Animaya (Unidades de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre). The Yucatan Times, March 24, 2022.⁴⁰

PANAMA

End of February 2022

Capira, West Panama Province, Panama

Two orange-chinned parakeets (*Brotogeris jugularis*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-crowned amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), 5 cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*), 4 budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), 19 peach-faced lovebirds (*Agapornis roseicollis*), 7 doves (genus *Zenaida*) and 9 black-bellied whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*, Appendix III in Honduras) were seized from a shop. Metrolibre, February 24, 2022.⁴¹

End of March 2022

David, Chiriquí Province, Panama

Four brown-throated conures (*Aratinga pertinax*, Appendix II) and 2 red-lored amazons (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II) are seized in the hands of 2 street vendors. "Thanks to the community for informing the Ministry of Environment. We are all committed to safeguarding our natural heritage, especially these birds, which are better seen in the wild in wooded areas than in a cage or in captivity," said biodiversity expert Mariela Ríos. Día a Día, March 23, 2022.⁴²

PERU

February 15, 2022

San Isidro, Province of Satipo, Department of Junín, Peru

Seizure of a captive parrot (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) outside a store. Serfor, February 15, 2022.⁴³

March 10, 2022

District of Sachaca, Province of Arequipa, Department of Arequipa, Peru

One blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), one scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix II), one orange-winged amazon (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) and 2 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) were seized from a farm. The owners did not have the authorization to keep them. Some birds had cut feathers. Serfor, February 10, 2022.⁴⁴



SURINAME

February 26 and 27, 2022

Bigi Pan Protected Area, Nickerie District, Suriname

Arrest of 2 men, including a lawyer, D.M., in possession of the carcasses of 2 scarlet ibises (*Eudocimus ruber*, Appendix II) and 2 hunting rifles held without a permit. The next day, 2 accomplices, including another lawyer, S.B., were arrested. "It is understood that the case of lawyer D.M. will be settled out of court."

Waterkant, February 27, 2022.⁴⁵

March 11, 2022

Galibi, Marowijne District, Suriname

Seizure in the heart of the village of 14 parrot or parakeet chicks (*Psittaciformes*, Appendix I or II).

Ministry of Defence, March 13, 2022.⁴⁶

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

March 6, 2022

Diego Martin Region, Trinidad and Tobago

A 29-year-old marine engineer is arrested for possession of 13 blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and a yellow-footed tortoise (*Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II).

CNC3, March 8, 2022.⁴⁷

CENTRAL ASIA

KAZAKHSTAN

Mid-March 2022

Syrdarya-Turkestan National Park, Turkistan Region, Kazakhstan

A photo of park director Akyl Abdykadyrov is circulating on Instagram. He poses with a hunter and the carcasses of several legally shot grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), and that of a great bustard (*Otis tarda*, Appendix II) the hunting of which is prohibited. The association 13й Кордон (13th Cordon) demands sanctions.

Syrdarya-Turkestan National Park, 1,200 km², is known for its Bokharan deer (*Cervus elaphus bactrianus*, Appendix II) reintroduction project.

Southern Kazakhstan, March 15, 2022.⁴⁸



UZBEKISTAN

February 22, 2022

Gishtkuprik Border Post, Tashkent Region, Uzbekistan. Border with Kazakhstan.

Seizure of 100 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) from an Uzbek national returning from abroad. They were entrusted to the Tashkent Zoo.

State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, February 26, 2022.⁴⁹



SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

20,719 birds seized in Indonesia between January 1, 2022 and March 31, 2022 according to official and media sources



Sources: Antara ; Directorate General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation ; FLIGHT – Protecting Indonesia's Birds ; iNews Kalbar ; KabarHandayani ; Kumparan ; Kupastuntas.co ; Liputan6.com ; Nkriku.com ; Satu Nusantara News ; Tanjung Priok Agricultural Quarantine Center ; Tribun Lampung ; Tribun Pontianak.



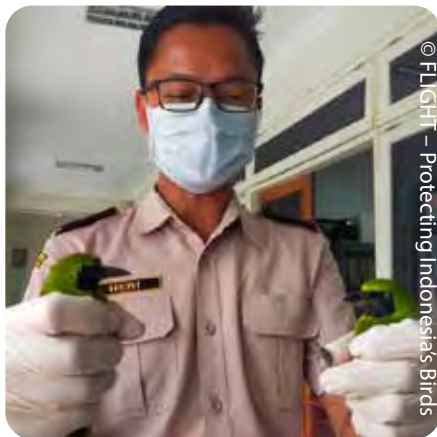
2,452 birds including 1,200 Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*). February 1, 2022. Bakauheni Port, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island



1,300 birds including bar-winged prinias (*Prinia familiaris*). February 17, 2022. Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island



More than 2,000 birds including black-naped oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*). March 17, 2022. Lampung Province, Sumatra Island



111 greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*) and 377 other birds. March 28, 2022. Port of Tanjung Perak, Surabaya, East Java Province, Java Island



8 black-capped lories (*Lorius lory*, Appendix II)s eized and sent to rehabilitation centre. January 7, 2022. Makassar, South Sulawesi Province, Sulawesi Island



65 birds including hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), blue-crowned hanging parrots (*Loriculus galgulus*, Appendix II), blue-masked leafbirds (*Chloropsis venusta*), greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*) and lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*). February 23, 2022. Riau Province, Sumatra Island

MALAYSIA

January 17, 2022

Kota Tinggi, State of Johor, Malaysia

Seizure of several dozen blue-rumped parrots (*Psittinus cyanurus*, Appendix II) and hanging parrots (*Loriculus* spp., Appendix II). One arrest. Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia, January 26, 2022.⁵⁰

January 18, 2022

Bau, State of Sarawak, Malaysia. Border with Indonesia.

Seizure by Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and General Operations Force (GOF) officers at a house of 61 birds: Oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*), white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), hanging parrots (*Loriculus* spp., Appendix II), and lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II, except for *Agapornis roseicollis*, which is not CITES-listed). They were transferred to the Matang Wildlife Centre.

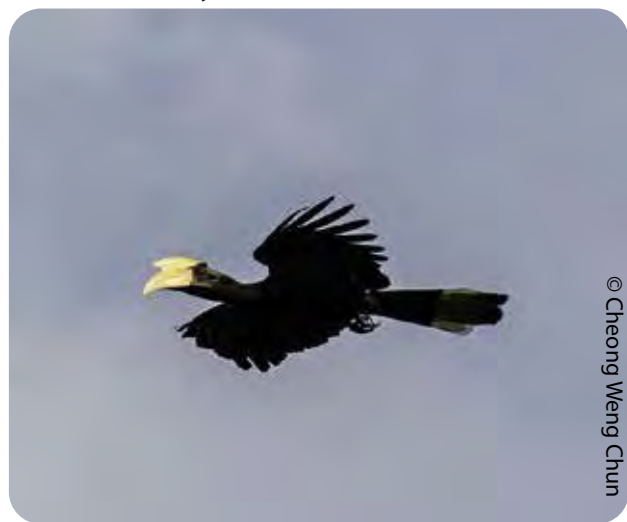
The Borneo Post, January 19, 2022.⁵¹

January 18, 2022

Bakong, State of Sarawak, Malaysia

He had held prisoner a black hornbill (*Anthracoceros malayanus*, Appendix II). He eventually handed the bird over to the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC). Another illegally held juvenile was returned by a man from Kuching to the forestry authority on December 13, 2021. The 2 hornbills will be released into the wild after undergoing a health check. The species is fully protected under the Wildlife Protection Ordinance 1998, which states that anyone selling mist nets for the capture of mammals or birds is guilty of an offense.

The Star, January 20, 2022.⁵²



Black hornbill (*Anthracoceros malayanus*)

March 16, 2022

District of Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia

A cardboard box containing 17 birds of different species was left. No one has shown up to claim ownership.

Daily Express, March 19, 2022.⁵³

PHILIPPINES

January 2022

Bongao, Province of Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

Seizure of 2 blue-naped parrots (*Tanygnathus lucionensis*, Appendix II) being sold by 2 young people.

GMA Network, February 2, 2022.⁵⁴

THAILAND

End of March 2022

Thailand

Experts and NGOs are concerned about the decline of songbirds in Asia, Latin America and Europe. CITES has just transferred straw-headed bulbuls (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*) to Appendix I and listed white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*) in Appendix II and Thailand is moving in the opposite direction. On a government mission to the Southern Provinces, the Deputy Defence Minister listened sympathetically to the grievances of elected officials and influencers about internal security, border security, marine fisheries and... red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*). The Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre (SBPAC) is in charge of putting together a dossier on the delisting of red-whiskered bulbuls from the list of protected species in Thailand. The delisting would be in line with the government's desire to encourage the breeding of native wildlife species for economic benefit and to strengthen cultural identity. Thailand wants "made in Thailand" red-whiskered bulbuls. To be continued.

Bangkok Post, 26 mars 2022.⁵⁵

1,511 birds seized in Thailand between January 1, 2022 and March 31, 2022
according to official and media sources



Sources: Channel 7HD ; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation ; Greencop – Thailand ; Komchadluek.net ; Matichon ; Mgronline.com ; Naewna.com ; Siamrath.



230 common tailorbirds (*Orthotomus sutorius*) and 6 lesser whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna javanica*). February 5, 2022. Wang Saphung District, Loei Province



Common tailorbird (*Orthotomus sutorius*)



16 birds including 2 barn owl chicks (*Tyto alba*, App. II) and 9 Eurasian hoopoes (*Upupa epops*). Feb. 10, 2022. Bangkok



7 birds including 2 red-billed blue magpies (*Urocissa erythroryncha*). March 11, 2022. Tha Miram, Phatthalung Province



105 birds including 76 scarlet-backed flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*). March 23, 2022. Mueang Pathum Thani District, Pathum Thani Province



300 red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*). March 25, 2022. Mueang Phitsanulok District, Phitsanulok Province



VIET NAM

January 2022

Kon Tum Province, Viet Nam

Seizure and release of a crimson sunbird (*Aethopyga siparaja*) and 6 orange-bellied leafbirds (*Chloropsis hardwickii*) kept in cages in a private home.

ENV, January 20, 2022.⁵⁶

January 2022

Phu Yen Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 2 Oriental pied hornbills (*Anthracoceros albirostris*, Appendix II) being sold on Facebook. Fine of 2 million dong (130 US\$).

ENV, January 30, 2022.⁵⁷



February 22, 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

Under the guise of a bird shop, the man was selling protected parrots on Facebook. Seizure of 4 lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II) and 5 budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*).

ENV, February 22, 2022.⁵⁸



March 2022

Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam

A red lory (*Eos rubra*, Appendix II) tied up outside an ear-piercing shop was seized. It was transferred to the wildlife rescue centre.

ENV, April 16, 2022.⁵⁹

SOUTHERN ASIA

BANGLADESH

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Night of January 1 to 2, 2022

Rajpat, Bagerhat District, Khulna Division, Bangladesh

They had reasons to be inconsolable ("tristis" means sad). More than 700 common mynas (*Acridotheres tristis*) were found netted in a barn. The birds, known locally as "shalik", were kept at Kaka Mia's house. Her son-in-law used to trap them in the canals and wetlands of the area to sell them.

Dhaka Tribune, January 2, 2022; Green Page, January 12, 2022.⁶⁰



January 2022

Kuakata Coast, Patuakhali District, Bansal Division, Bangladesh



The rush of tourists to a seasonal 2,000-hectare island about 30 km from the beaches of Kuakata is putting an undreamt site for migratory birds and red crabs in grave danger. Tourists arrive in this sanctuary in boatloads chartered by travel agencies and improvised excursionists with their sound boxes and other city noise. They crush the carpet of red crabs and crowd around the nests. The lack of guidelines from the Ministry of Tourism and the district contributes to anarchy and poaching. Nets are stretched between bamboo poles, catching large and small seabirds. Other nets are set by fishermen at low tide so that when the tide rises and goes out again, thousands of fish are caught. The smaller ones die on the spot and the bigger ones are dried in huts and sold to tourists, at the Kuakata fish market, or in the street. Some travel agencies encourage their clients to stay overnight despite the risk of theft and physical assault. There is not a single police officer on the sand and silt atoll.

Discovered in December 2017, the month of Bangladesh's victory and independence, the island was dubbed "Char Bijoy," the Victory Tank. "Chars" in the Bay of Bengal are sand and soil banks that form and deform due to river floods and currents. United News of Bangladesh, February 18, 2020; The Daily Star, January 24 and March 18, 2022.⁶¹

INDIA

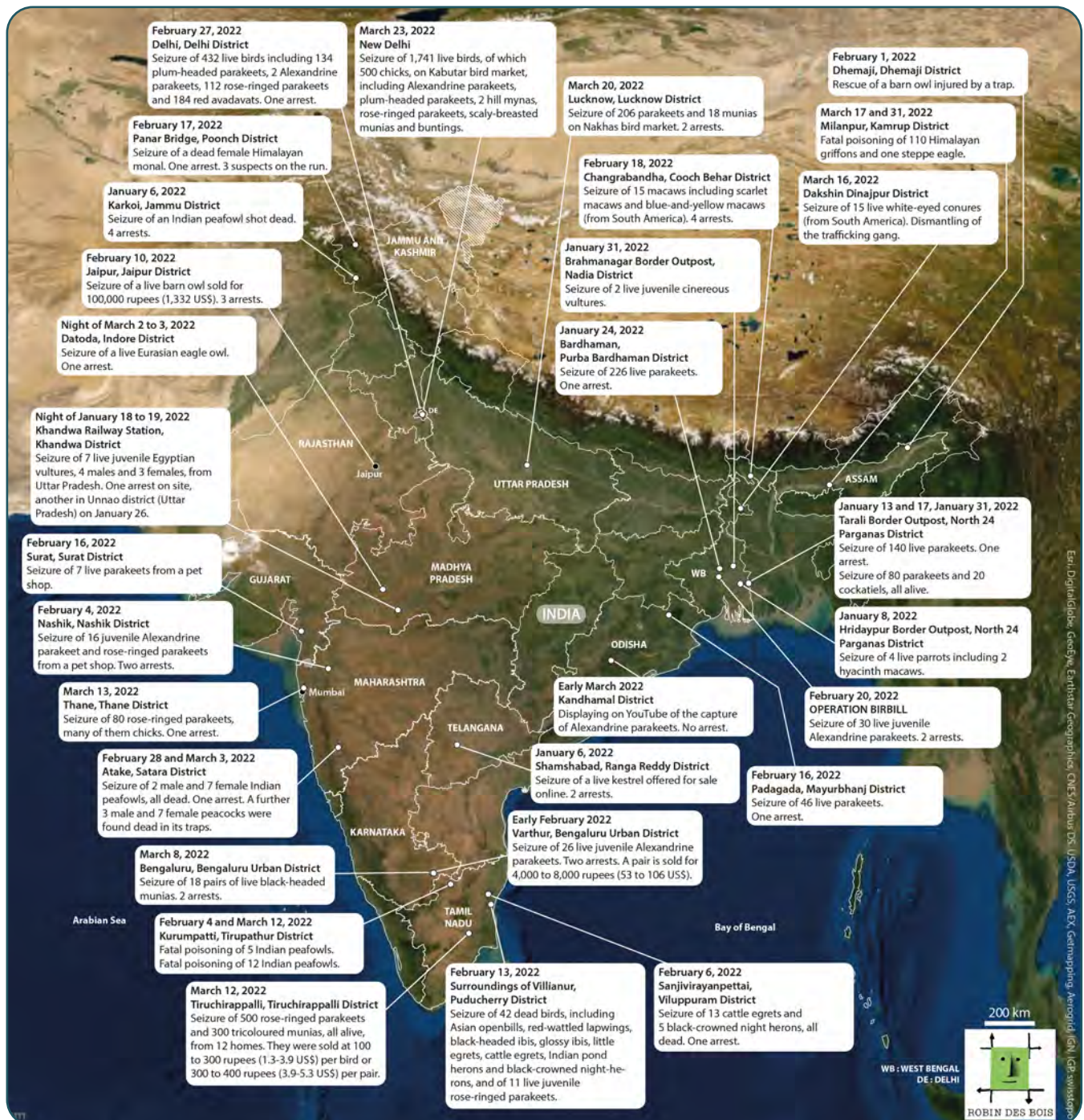
February 17, 2022

Panar Bridge, Poonch District, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, India

The control of the vehicle resulted in the discovery and seizure of a female Himalayan monal (*Lophophorus impejanus*, Appendix I) and 2.5 kg of the meat of an unspecified wild animal and the arrest of the driver while 3 passengers fled.

Greater Kashmir, February 19, 2022.⁶²

4,174 birds poached or seized in India between January 1 and March 31, 2022, according to official and media sources



Steppe eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*, Appendix II)
Little egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
Blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II)
Hyacinth macaw (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I)
Scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I)
Asian openbill (*Anastomus oscitans*)
Red avadavat (*Amandava amandava*)
Black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
Bunting (genus *Emberiza*)
Cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*)
Munia (genus *Lonchura*)
Tricoloured munia (*Lonchura malacca*)
Black-headed munia (*Lonchura atricapilla*)
Scaly-breasted munia (*Lonchura punctulata*)
Barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II)
White-eyed conure (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II)
Indian pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*)

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II)
Cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II)
Black-headed ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*)
Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)
Hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II)
Himalayan monal (*Lophophorus impejanus*, Appendix I)
Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan)
Parrot and parakeet (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II except for *Agapornis roseicollis*, *Melopsittacus undulatus* and *Psittacula krameri*)
Alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II)
Plum-headed parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*, Appendix II)
Rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)
Red-wattled lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*)
Himalayan griffon (*Gyps himalayensis*, Appendix II)
Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*, Appendix II)
Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II)

Sources: Bangalore Mirror ; Bardhaman.com ; Border Security Force South Bengal ; Deccan Herald ; Deshdoot Times ; Down To Earth ; East Mojo ; Greater Kashmir ; Hindustan Times ; India Today ; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India) ; Ommcom News ; Orissa Post ; The Free Press Journal ; The Hindu ; The Indian Express ; The New Indian Express ; The Statesman ; The Telegraph India ; The Times of India ; WCCB ; Wildlife SOS ; Zee News.



26 Alexandrine parakeet chicks (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II). February 2022. Varthur, Bengaluru Urban District, State of Karnataka



7 Egyptian vultures (*Neophron percnopterus*, Appendix II). Night of 18 to 19 and 26 January 2022. Khandwa, Khandwa District, State of Madhya Pradesh



13 cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) and 5 black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). February 6, 2022. Sanjivirayanpettai, Viluppuram District, State of Tamil Nadu



30 Alexandrine parakeet chicks (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II). February 20, 2022. State of West Bengal



15 macaws, including scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) and blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). February 18, 2022. Changrabandha, Cooch Behar District, State of West Bengal



80 rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*). March 13, 2022. Thane, Thane District, State of Maharashtra

IRAN

January 25 - February 20, 2022

Miankaleh Wildlife Sanctuary, Golestan and Mazandaran Provinces, Iran

Miankaleh Sanctuary consists of a long, narrow peninsula 48 km long and 1.3 to 3.2 km wide and Gorgan Bay, a virtually closed ecosystem separated from the Caspian Sea. The natural habitats are marshes, sand and mud shores, shallow marine waters, peat lands, dunes, residual forests. The ecological balance of this biosphere is threatened by poultry farming, overfishing, poaching, overgrazing, drying up of wells, and the depletion of water tables.

Dozens of poachers have taken over the wetland. They attack migratory birds and do not hesitate to shoot to intimidate the guards. Only superficial wounds are to be deplored. Poachers also come from the sea and catch carp, mullet, and sturgeon (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II).

Miankaleh wetland is listed as a Ramsar site (Ramsar Convention is the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat"). It is home to birds from the Caspian Sea and serves as a staging area between late November and late March for birds from northern Asia and the Middle East, including Dalmatian pelicans (*Pelecanus crispus*, Appendix I), imperial eagles (*Aquila heliaca*, Appendix I),

American flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II), white-headed ducks (*Oxyura leucocephala*, Appendix II), pigmy cormorants (*Microcarbo pygmeus*), collared pratincoles (*Glareola pratincola*), little terns (*Sternula albifrons*), common gadwells (*Mareca strepera*), and herons and egrets (family Ardeidae). The winter bird population is estimated at several hundred thousand individuals. Jungle cats (*Felis chaus*, Appendix II) and golden jackals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) remain in the forests and dunes.

In January 2020, the mysterious death of 40,000 migratory birds was attributed by veterinarians to botulism poisoning. In 2021, *Clostridium botulinum* is believed to have killed 10,000 individuals.

Payamema.ir, February 26, 2022; Tehran Times, September 28, 2022.⁶³



PAKISTAN

January 7, 2022

Dera Ismail Khan, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Dozens of Eurasian skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) were released by Said Kamal, Wildlife Conservator of the southern circle of D.I. Khan Wildlife Park. They had been seized from poachers who were bringing them from Afghanistan to sell them to caged bird lovers. UrduPoint, January 7, 2022.⁶⁴

January 2022

Mansehra Interchange, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Two peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) were seized by a special team from the Wildlife Department in Abbottabad. The raptors had been smuggled from Torghar district to Islamabad by 3 men who were arrested.

The News International, January 25, 2022.⁶⁵

March 2022

Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan

Sardar Mohammad Aslam Gabol and Abdul Rasheed were acquitted on May 31, 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°33, p. 171). They convinced the courts that their trade in falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) in Karachi was legal. "We buy falcons from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan and also from Afghanistan and sell them in the Middle East." But the Karachi court was silent on the fate of the 75 falcons, a fine assortment of 4 species. Customs and the Sindh Wildlife Department have appealed against the decision. Impounded in Karachi pending the outcome of the legal dispute, 71 of the "exhibits" died of malnutrition and dehydration. By March 2021, as summer approached, there were calls for the seized falcons and houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) to be moved north to Gilgit-Baltistan, but the time of justice in Sindh paid little heed to the excessive temperature suffered by the birds and they died one after another.

Iftikhar Khan, the customs officer who seized the falcons, says the slow pace of justice not only killed the falcons but also deterred customs and other authorities from pursuing the smugglers. "Hundreds of hawks are on the black market in Pakistan." "But who will conduct a raid now?" "Any raid against such smugglers will result in the murder of birds." "That is the lesson we learn from this story."

Arab News, March 11, 2022.⁶⁶



The 2 brothers Awais Jam and Abdul Karim Jam are National Assembly members of PPP (Pakistan People's Party), the opposition party which, following a vote of no confidence, caused the resignation of Prime Minister Imran Khan on April 10, 2022. It was in one of their properties that Nazim Jokhio was beaten to death on the night of November 3, 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.8). The Jam brothers had invited public figures from the Persian Gulf to come and practise their falconry skills near their home, to the detriment of the houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I), and Jokhio had expressed his opposition on the hunting ground. This is the first time in the country that the cause of the bustards has resulted in the death of an activist. Until then, the fate of the bustards was decided before the courts, which all ruled in their favour, and by the cabinets of the federal and provincial governments, which, in the name of historical and economic relations between Pakistan on the one hand and the countries of the Persian Gulf (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Qatar) on the other, disregarded the decisions of the courts. In the days following the discovery of Nazim's body and the results of the autopsy, indignation was unanimous and solidarity with the family was demonstrative. But in the weeks that followed, the facade of unity cracked and the Jam brothers enjoyed a surprising convergence of support and indulgence.

On March 26, Abdul Karim Jam, who had taken refuge in Dubai, was granted bail of 100,000 rupees (560 US\$) on his return to Pakistan, which allowed him to participate in the vote of no confidence and to contribute to Imran Khan's resignation.

In the final report of the police investigation, the 2 National Assembly members and 10 of their servants are listed in blue ink, a colour code that effectively recommends that judges not bring any charges against them for lack of sufficient evidence. Three bodyguards are suspected by the police of having committed the murder. Niaz Salar is said to have played a leading role in fetching the victim from his home under the pretext of a "meeting" with the National Assembly members and their guests. He is on the run. To be continued.

Dawn, March 26, April 9, 14, 18 and 19, 2022.⁶⁷

CYPRUS

January 2022

Xylofagou, Larnaca District, Cyprus

CABS activists catch 2 poachers collecting their booty in their nets. One of the 2 flees. The second one is fined 7,000 € (7,935 US\$). A wounded barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), one Eurasian blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 18 thrushes (family Turdidae), 4 nets, and an electronic decoy were seized. The owl was handed over to a veterinarian in Nicosia.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, January 31, 2022.⁶⁸



January 17, 2022

Paralimni Lake, Famagusta District, Cyprus

It survived the bullets it was shot with, not the ones it ingested. An American flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II) riddled with pellets was a victim of lead poisoning. Its stomach was full of lead shot cartridges. The wetland is not completely safe from hunting and a nearby clay pigeon shooting range also contaminates the soil and water. It is estimated that at least one million water birds die of lead poisoning in Europe every year.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, January 19, 2022.⁶⁹

February 23, 2022

Neo Chorio and Lemóna, Paphos District, Cyprus

Two poachers, aged 34 and 49, were each fined 500 € (560 US\$). They had used an illegal decoy to attract their preys. The authorities had seized 6 dead wild birds, a shotgun and 20 cartridges.

Cyprus Mail, February 24, 2022.⁷⁰



GEORGIA

Mid-January 2022

City of Tbilisi, Georgia

An injured white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) is brought to the veterinarian by locals. Diagnosis: several pellets in the body and a broken wing. He will spend his recovery period at the city zoo. Sabuko, January 25, 2022.⁷¹



LEBANON

Early February 2022

Machghara, Beqaa Governorate, Lebanon

Middle East Sustainable Hunting Center (MESHC) and the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) report to the authorities a photo of a man posing with a freshly shot long-legged buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*, Appendix II) displayed on the hood of a car that had been circulating the web. The man is quickly identified. He will have to answer for poaching an endangered species. He faces a fine of several thousand US\$, a one-month jail sentence, and the revocation of his hunting license.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, February 10, 2022.⁷²

End of March 2022

Baalbek, Baalbek-Hermel Governorate, Lebanon

A griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) shot over Syria reappeared three and a half years later. The bird had been tagged and fitted with a GPS transmitter in Sofia, Bulgaria. The miraculous bird survived the shooting, but ended up into a private zoo after being taken in. "Farid" will either be reintroduced into the wild or sent back to Bulgaria.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, March 29, 2022.⁷³



NORTHERN EUROPE

DANEMARK

March 28, 2022

Copenhagen International Airport, Capital Region, Denmark

Seizure of 2 live grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) in a transport cage. The traveller came from the Middle East.

The Danish Customs Agency, April 7, 2022.⁷⁴

IRLANDE

March 2022

Delvin, County Westmeath, Ireland

Four common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were shot dead above a field. They were found in an advanced state of decomposition. Only one could be autopsied. An investigation has been opened. Meath Chronicle, March 16, 2022.⁷⁵

UNITED KINGDOM

January 9, 2022

Hexham, Northumberland County, England, United Kingdom

Suspicious disappearance of a female northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*, Appendix II) born in 2021. Its GPS has stopped transmitting. Neither the bird nor the GPS was found.

Raptor Persecution UK, March 8, 2022.⁷⁶

Mid-January 2022

Leeds, West Yorkshire County, England, United Kingdom

Discovery of several poisoned raptors (Accipitridae, Falconidae or Strigidae, Appendix I or II) in the northeast of the city. They show high levels of rat poison.

Yorkshire Evening Post, January 16, 2022.⁷⁷



January 25 and end of March 2022

Lochan Estate, Perth and Kinross Council, Scotland, United Kingdom

Following the discovery of a dead northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*, Appendix II) in a trap, the Lochan hunting estate, popular with hunters of willow ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*) and pheasants (family Phasianidae), has been sanctioned by NatureScot, the public body in charge of nature protection in Scotland. For the next 3 years, the owners and managers of the land are no longer allowed the general licences that permitted them to "control" at their discretion, without applying to the authorities, the populations of wild birds to protect their flocks. The estate's appeal was rejected in late March.

NatureScot, January 26, 2022; The Herald, January 26, 2022; Raptor Persecution UK, January 26 and 27, and March 22, 2022.⁷⁸



January 26, 2022

Forest of Bowland, Lancashire and North Yorkshire Counties, England, United Kingdom

New "suspicious" disappearance of a young female northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*, Appendix II).

Raptor Persecution UK, March 8, 2022.⁷⁹

**January 27 and March 2022
Dorset County, England, United Kingdom**

A white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) released as part of a reintroduction project on the Isle of Wight is found dead in a game-shooting estate. Toxicological analyses, released in March, revealed a level of brodifacoum (a rodenticide) 7 times higher than the lethal dose.



On March 29, Dorset Police announced that the case had been closed on the grounds that the tests were "inconclusive, and it has therefore not been possible to confirm that any criminal offense has been committed.

It has not been possible to establish whether this was as a result of a deliberate act or due to secondary rodenticide poisoning." Were the police subject to political pressure? On February 11, MP Chris Loder called on the police to "focus on county lines" rather than waste time and money investigating the deaths of raptors. Dorset is not the place for eagles to be reintroduced".

Raptor Persecution UK, February 10 and 11, March 29 and April 20, 2022; The Telegraph, May 14, 2022.⁸⁰

**January 28, 2022
Nottingham, Nottinghamshire County, England, United Kingdom**

Sentence of John Orrey, a 63 year old game warden, to 20 weeks in prison suspended for 12 months and a fine of 1,000 £ (1,360 US\$). He must also pay 700 £ (950 US\$) in court costs and 180 £ (240 US\$) in damages to the Wild Justice Raptor Forensics Fund. On January 8 and 9, 2021, he had beaten to death 2 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) in a cage trap, without realizing that he was being filmed by a camera installed by the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). At least 2 other buzzards had been trapped previously.

Raptor Persecution UK, January 6 and 28, 2022; The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, January 28, 2022.⁸¹



**February 4, 2022
Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom**

Dewi Price, aged 40, received a 6-month prison sentence that was suspended for 12 months, plus a 20-day rehabilitation activity requirement. He is also forbidden to own a dog for 2 years. He was accused of killing a European badger (*Meles meles*) in Builth Wells (County Powys), keeping a red fox cub (*Vulpes vulpes*) at his home in Gelligaer (Caerphilly Municipality), and disturbing red kite (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) nests in May 2019. He had filmed himself feeding nestlings and had taken one of them away. The juvenile red kite was not recovered during a search of his home in June 2019. Based on the decryption of his internet search history, he was planning to use it to engage in some falconry ersatz.

South Wales Argus, February 10, 2022.⁸²



**February 9, 2022
Invercauld Estate, Aberdeenshire Council, Scotland, United Kingdom**

A golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) had been found dead on the estate in March 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.181). As in Lochan, NatureScot has decided to suspend for 3 years the general licences of the owners and managers of the domain "because of the risk of more wildlife crimes taking place." This restriction applies to the Gairnshiel and Micras moors. The estate's appeal was rejected on February 25, 2022. Border Telegraph, February 9, 2022; NatureScot, February 9, 2022; The Herald, February 9, 2022; Raptor Persecution UK, April 7, 2022.⁸³



**February 10, 2022
Sheffield, South Yorkshire County, England, United Kingdom**

Wanted. A one-year-old northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*, Appendix II) has again gone "suspiciously" missing in an area commonly frequented by willow ptarmigan hunters. No trace was found in the area of its last GPS signal. This is the 61st northern harrier reported missing since 2018.

Raptor Persecution UK, February 25 and 26, 2022; South Yorkshire Police, February 25, 2022.⁸⁴

**Mid-February 2022
Telford, Shropshire County, England, United Kingdom**

While investigating serial muffler thefts, police also recovered 5 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine). The suspect was also in possession of car batteries and 37,000 £ (49,550 US\$) in cash.

Chief Constable Pippa Mills (West Mercia Police), February 17, 2022.⁸⁵

February 27, 2022

Dorset County, England, United Kingdom

After the white-tailed eagles, it is the turn of a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and a red kite (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) to be discovered dead in a hunting estate in northern Dorset. Poisoning is suspected. Raptor Persecution UK, April 4, 2022; The Independent, April 7, 2022.⁸⁶



February 2022

Dorset County, England, United Kingdom

Discovery of another white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) on a hunting property adjacent to the one where another white-tailed eagle was found poisoned in January (see page 133). Deliberate poisoning is suspected. Other dead birds were found at the site. The eagle survived.

Raptor Persecution UK, April 1, 2022; The Telegraph, May 14, 2022.⁸⁷



March 15, 2022

Cratfield, Suffolk County, England, United Kingdom

The peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) was lying in a field. Its legs were broken and deeply cut by a trap. This was not the end of its ordeal: it had then been targeted by a shooter. He was euthanized at Suffolk Owl Sanctuary.

East Anglian Daily Times, May 16, 2022; Raptor Persecution UK, May 16, 2022.⁸⁸



March 24, 2022

Newhall, Derbyshire County, England, United Kingdom

Call for information. A private individual found a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and a Eurasian magpie (*Pica pica*) on the ground at the cemetery. A veterinary examination revealed that they had been shot.

Raptor Persecution UK, May 25, 2022.⁸⁹

SWEDEN

February 2022

Rockneby, Kalmar County, Sweden

A dead white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) is found on the side of the road. Necropsy reveals the presence of several bullets in its body.

Sveriges Radio, June 17, 2022.⁹⁰

WESTERN EUROPE

GERMANY

Early January 2022

Regensburg District, Bavaria State, Germany

Three dead poisoned common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were found by walkers. The culprit had once again used the insecticide carbofuran.

Bild, January 27, 2022; BR24, January 27, 2022.⁹¹



January 18, 2022

District of Starnberg, Bavaria, Germany

A hunter's dog discovers the corpse of a griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II). The man immediately informed the veterinary services. The X-ray shows a bullet.

Merkur.de, January 20 and 21 and February 11, 2022; Tatort Natur, February 11, 2022.⁹²

February 9, 2022

Erfurt, Thuringia State, Germany

In the district of Gispersleben, residents observe a bird wandering on the ground, unable to fly. The bird was a female peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), less than a year old, with the feathers of its right wing cut off. Authorities suspect foul play. Clipping the raptor's feathers was a way to keep it in captivity, or to sentence it to death. Unable to hunt, he could no longer feed. Once its feathers grow back, it will be released into the wild.

Erfurt.de, February 28, 2022.⁹³

February 12, 2022

Kelheim District, Bavaria State, Germany

A female European sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II) stuck in a trap cage is found by volunteers on patrol. It was handed over to the LBV (Landesbundes für Vogelschutz, Bavarian nature conservation association) for care. The police put a 71-year-old man under investigation. The capture of the hawk was apparently accidental. The trap was meant for foxes and martens.

BR24, February 14, 2022; TVA, February 14, 2022.⁹⁴



February 24, 2022

Altmarkkreis Salzwedel District, Lower Saxony State, Germany

The poacher of a white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) was found. The 81-year-old game warden did not notice that his victim was wearing a GPS transmitter until he returned home. The next morning, he disposed of the transmitter and the body by throwing them into the water at 2 different locations. But it was too late. The environmental officers followed the geolocation indications to his home and had no trouble getting his confession.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, March 8, 2022.⁹⁵

Early March 2022

Hamburg International Airport, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany

Seizure of a pair of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) from a traveler coming from Morocco via Paris. He declared that he was keeping the birds on behalf of a relative who was currently abroad. He has 4 weeks to prove that he is acting lawfully. The birds are in the care of an animal protection association.

polizeiticker.online, March 16, 2022.⁹⁶

Early March 2022

Freyung, Bavaria State, Germany

A passer-by reported the carcasses of 2 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) at the Reutenstraße. The Bavarian State Office for Health and Food Safety "does not rule out the possibility that they died due to trauma caused by a trap."

Bavarian Police, March 29, 2022.⁹⁷



March 31, 2022

Nunkirchen, Saarland State, Germany

A macabre discovery near the Hannejuschtweg hiking trail. A northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II) lies on the ground, pierced by a bullet. North Saarland Police Inspectorate, April 1, 2022.⁹⁸

March 2022

Rottal-Inn District, Bavaria State, Germany

This time it was a Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) that was shot dead.

Since the beginning of the year, 28 birds have been found dead of unnatural causes in Bavaria, of which 7 were poisoned with carbofuran, 2 were poisoned with pentobarbital and 2 were shot.

Tatort Natur, April 11, 2022.⁹⁹

AUSTRIA

January 2022

Carinthia State, Austria

Alerted by the police unit "PUMA" which specializes in border protection, the customs officers went to the house of the author of an Internet advertisement selling a pair of red-fronted macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*, Appendix I) and a pair of great green macaws (*Ara ambiguus*, Appendix I). He is from Styria State and admits that he does not have the necessary CITES documents. He already sold a pair of blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). He will have to pay at least 2,700 € (3,000 US\$) for tax evasion. Another procedure is underway for violating the law regulating the trade of protected species. The birds were entrusted to someone with the necessary permits.

Kronen Zeitung, March 24, 2022; Federal Ministry of Finance, March 24, 2022.¹⁰⁰

March 10, 2022

Neusiedl am See District, Burgenland State, Austria

The female white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) found shot by hunters a few weeks earlier has died. The eagle died of lead poisoning in the Haringsee Raptor Care Center.

Kurier, March 10, 2022.¹⁰¹

BELGIUM

REPEATED OFFENSE

January 26, 2022

Flemish Region, Belgium

Fifteen people have been fined a total of over 53,000 € (60,000 US\$) for the illegal capture and keeping of birds. Some of the perpetrators were also charged with mistreatment. The highest fine was 9,600 € (10,880 US\$). Two of the convicts were repeat offenders, and one ran a pet shop. They attacked European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), common redpolls (*Carduelis flammea*, synonymous with *Acanthis flammea*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), red crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*, Appendix III in Ukraine), common linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III in Ukraine), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), grey partridges (*Perdix perdix*), fieldfares (*Turdus pilaris*), common pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) and common starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*). The birds were caught with mist nets or traps and then sold unbanded or with fake tags.

Nieuwsblad, January 26, 2022.¹⁰²



Mid-February 2022

Malle, Province of Antwerp, Flemish Region, Belgium

Discovery of a female peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) with 2 bullet wounds. The caretakers of the Kapellen Wildlife Refuge are hopeful that it will be able to fly free again.

Nieuwsblad, April 1, 2022.¹⁰³

Early March 2022

Bornem, Province of Antwerp, Flemish Region, Belgium

A common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) collapsed in a garden, victim of a rifle bullet. The association Vogelbescherming Vlaanderen filed a complaint against a person unknown.

Gazet van Antwerpen, March 7, 2022.¹⁰⁴

March 9, 2022

Municipality of Knokke-Heist, Province of West Flanders, Flemish Region, Belgium

The new resident of the ornithological centre of Ostend is a griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) with a wingspan of more than 2 meters and a weight of 9.5 kg. It was taken in after being reported by residents of the Ramskapelle District. According to Claude Velter, director of the centre, it was shot in France. The prognosis is not life threatening. VRT, March 11, 2022.¹⁰⁵

FRANCE

January 7, 2022

Department of Ardèche, France

Fifteen red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) and 20 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were found poisoned with carbofuran and anti-coagulants in the municipalities of Chauzon and Pradons, between January and March 2021. The LPO Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes has filed a complaint against a person unknown for destruction of a protected species with the French Office of Biodiversity, after a first complaint in April 2021 for 2 bearded vultures (*Gypaetus barbatus*, Appendix II) poisoned in the heart of the Vanoise National Park (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.186).

At the top of the food chain, the birds of prey "consume the corpses of animals that have also been poisoned," summarizes Louis Granier, the president of the Drôme-Ardèche delegation of the LPO. "What is particularly depressing is that we find pesticides that have been banned since 2008 [...], which proves that people have kept some or that they get their supplies from illegal networks via the Internet."

Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, January 26, 2022; France 3 Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, January 27, 2022.¹⁰⁶

January 10 and April 21, 2022

Parrot World, Crécy-la-Chapelle, Department of Seine-et-Marne, France

During the night, 2 parrots are stolen. Three days later, 2 men consult a veterinarian. They are looking for advice on how to treat a grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) and a red-fronted parrot (*Poicephalus gulielmi*, Appendix II). The veterinarian was able to identify the patients more easily as he had a contract with Parrot World. The 2 individuals, aged between 20 and 23 years, acknowledged the thefts from Thoiry (see page 106) and Parrot World. Nothing to do with the mafia that killed Vince, just thieves who wanted to show off through videos of themselves and exotic animals on the net.

78actu, April 22, 2022; Le Parisien, April 22, 2022.¹⁰⁷



January 20, 2022

Milhaud, Department of Gard, France

Two European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and several empty cages were seized by the gendarmes of Vauvert, in collaboration with the agents of the OFB of Gard. The intervention was carried out within the framework of an investigation for threatening with a weapon and burning a vehicle. This species is the object of "very lucrative trade in the region" according to the authorities, who have "placed the birds in a care centre in Laroque (Hérault) for a future release into the wild."

Actu Occitanie, January 21, 2022; La Gazette de Nîmes, January 21, 2022; La Semaine des Pyrénées, January 21, 2022.¹⁰⁸

January 25, 2022

Blois, Department of Loir-et-Cher, France

A live pigeon was placed in a jaw trap to attract raptors (Accipitridae, Falconidae or Strigidae, Appendix I or II). Another trap contained dead bait, in this case half a wild rabbit stuffed with Curater granules, a powerful carbofuran agricultural insecticide. The poacher in his 60s, who is also approved by the prefecture to trap "pests," was sentenced to a fine of 1000 € (1,130 US\$), half of which was suspended for the attempted destruction of a protected species, 2 fines of 200 € (225 US\$) for the use of the poison, and 100 € (110 US\$) for the use of unauthorized traps. He will also have to pay 250 € (280 US\$) for moral damages to the civil parties.

La Nouvelle République, January 29, 2022.¹⁰⁹



FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 28, 2022

Montauban, Department of Tarn-et-Garonne, France

Two brothers, aged 26 and 30, without a lawyer, were fined in absentia. A fine of 1,000 € (1,130 US\$) of which 650 € (735 US\$) was suspended and an additional misdemeanour fine of 150 € (170 US\$) for the younger brother. A fine of 1,500 € (1,700 US\$), an additional misdemeanour fine of 150 €, 1,000 € for the civil party and 400 € (450 US\$) for legal costs, i.e. a total of 3,050 € (3,460 US\$) for the elder. The Travellers had imported from Spain and held a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and 4 "mules", hybrids of goldfinch and canary (*Serinus canaria domestica*), in Nègrepelisse. At the time of arrest, they explained that they were breeding the birds to train them for singing competitions.

La Dépêche du Midi, February 1, 2022.¹¹⁰

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 2, 2022

Montpellier, Department of Hérault, France

Colourful birds with such a melodious song in the silence of the black market. The authorities seized from a poacher a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), a Eurasian siskin (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), all the necessary birdlime equipment and restraining cages. The 44-year-old repeat offender, who had been monitored for 6 months, trapped goldfinches and other passerines in feeding areas or in the city's parks with birdlime-coated sticks. 20 Minutes, February 2, 2022; Midi Libre, February 2, 2022.¹¹¹



February 2, 2022

Heudicourt, Department of Eure, France

Seven European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), cages and numerous veterinary products were seized from a man with no job or permit who was selling the whole lot on Facebook.

L'Impartial, February 14, 2022; Paris-Normandie, February 15, 2022.¹¹²

facebook

February 4, 2022

Alpilles Regional Natural Park, Department of Bouches-du-Rhône, France

A Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus*, Appendix II) found riddled with pellets. Despite treatment, the bird of prey succumbed to its injuries on March 1. The LPO and the CEN PACA have lodged a complaint. Alpilles Regional Natural Park, March 16, 2022; Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, March 17, 2022.¹¹³



February 10, 2022

Rivesaltes, Department of Pyrénées-Orientales, France

Caught in the act of setting a birdlime trap. A search of the poacher's house allowed to recover 106 birds in aviaries: European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), serins (*Serinus serinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and common linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III in Ukraine), which have all been released. The apparently experienced individual was taken into custody and will answer for his actions in court. Actu Perpignan, February 11, 2022.¹¹⁴



February 20, 2022

Monnaie, Department of Indre-et-Loire, France

Fourteen European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) found at the road toll, hidden in 2 plastic boxes in the cab of a lorry. The Spanish truck driver, suspected of being involved in trafficking between the Iberian Peninsula and Belgium, left free. The birds were handed over to the association for the protection of birds "Sauve qui Plume".

French Customs, February 25, 2022; La Nouvelle République, February 25, 2022.¹¹⁵

February 26, 2022

Acheville, Department of Pas-de-Calais, France

Seizure of about 30 birds and bird traps during a search. European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) and European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*) have been released. L'Avenir de l'Artois, March 3, 2022.¹¹⁶



March 17 and 21, 2022

Department of Bouches-du-Rhône and Gergovie Plateau, Department of Puy-de-Dôme, France

Two female short-toed eagles (*Circaetus gallicus*, Appendix II) have regained their freedom. These hovering birds, easy targets for trigger-happy fanatics, had been riddled with pellets in May and September 2021. Treated in an LPO rescue centre and fitted with miniaturised GPS tags, one has returned to the place where it was found wounded, while the other has taken up residence in the Sioule gorges, in southern Allier. Since the beginning of 2022, the rescue centre has counted 10 protected species that have fallen victim to illegal shooting: a Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus*, Appendix II), a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), a black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), 3 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), 3 kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II) and a grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*).

Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, April 5 and May 3, 2022.¹¹⁷

March 28, 2022

Labastide-d'Armagnac, Department of Landes, France

A black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II) had been shot 3 times in its right wing. After 9 months of rehabilitation, it was released as its fellow birds returned from migration.

Alca Torda, March 29, 2022; Sud Ouest, March 29, 2022.¹¹⁸



THE NETHERLANDS

November 2021 and mid-February 2022

Tubbergen, Province of Overijssel, The Netherlands



Following the discovery of nets and cages with live bait in the vicinity of the municipality in November 2021, the police and NVWA (Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) searched 2 homes, businesses, and land in February. Firearms, 40,000 € (44,550 US\$) in cash, more than 100 meters of nets, and 96 birds including European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Eurasian bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and redwings (*Turdus iliacus*) were confiscated and handed over to an approved shelter.

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, March 2, 2022.¹¹⁹

SUISSE

Mid-February 2022

Basel, Canton of Basel-Stadt, Switzerland



Since the summer of 2020, 6 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) and 2 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) have been found dead in unnatural circumstances around Basel. After several months of investigations, the police have identified a suspect. He has just been indicted for poisoning. According to the NGO BirdLife Switzerland, peregrine falcons are regularly poisoned intentionally in the country by "kamikaze" pigeons.

BirdLife Switzerland, 18 February 2022.¹²⁰

SOUTHERN EUROPE

ALBANIA

January 2022

Lushnjë District, Fier County, Albania

Witnesses claim to have seen red-breasted geese (*Branta ruficollis*, Appendix II). This is an exceptional event. Their last appearance in the country would date back to 2004. They usually do not cross the borders of Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine during their winter migration from Siberia. The only concrete evidence of their passage is rather macabre: it is the corpse of a shot goose. According to some locals, about ten red-breasted geese have been killed.

Albanian Ornithological Society, January 26, 2022.¹²¹

SPAIN

January 10, 2022

Olmedo, Province of Valladolid, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain



Mass poisoning: 7 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II), one common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and one red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) found dead. The European project "Life Eurokite" for the protection of the red kite recorded almost 20% of deaths from poisoning out of 426 marked specimens. Thirteen countries are affected, in southern Europe, but also in Austria, Slovakia and Czechia.

Life Eurokite (with Asociación Acenva), January 27, 2022.¹²²

Mid-January 2022

Autonomous Community of La Rioja, Spain



Forty traps for passerines (genus *Passer*) seized by forest officers in the mountains. Nuevecuatrouno, January 15, 2022.¹²³



European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*, Appendix III in Ukraine) that fell into these traps

January 16, 2022

Santa Susana, Province of Barcelona, Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain



Arrest of 2 poachers in possession of nets and 46 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine). Most of the birds are males and one is dead. The GEVA (Grup Especial d'Antifurtivisme i Verins), an anti-poaching unit, had been monitoring the area since December and had noticed the comings and goings of a man who was depositing seeds next to a trap. The goldfinches were taken to a wildlife care center to be released. Generalitat de Catalunya, February 9, 2022.¹²⁴

REPEATED OFFENSE

January 18 and May 25, 2022

Toledo, Province of Toledo, Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain



Between August and September 2011, environmental protection officers and the Seprona (Servicio de Protección de la Naturaleza) discovered on the hunting ground "La Casa Nueva" near Gerindote (province of Toledo) about 60 carcasses of poisoned animals or in some cases shot. Most of them were birds of prey, including an Iberian imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*, Appendix I), 23 black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), 6 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) and 5 marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II).

The 3 suspects had been required to post bail of 168,000 € (208,300 US\$) in April 2018. Two are now deceased. The last one, a game warden at the time of the events, had already been accused 10 years earlier of shooting or killing nocturnal raptors with poison on the same hunting ground.

After 11 years of waiting, and thanks to the efforts of the NGOs Ecologistas en Acción, SEO/BirdLife and WWF España, the trial for the biggest case of raptor poisoning in Castilla La Mancha finally begins this January 18... or almost. It was immediately postponed because the defense contested the toxicological analyses.

On May 25, after a hearing of the experts in charge of these analyses, the trial resumed. To be continued. The province of Toledo is the Spanish province with the highest number of poisonings of Iberian imperial eagles. Cinereous vultures (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II) are also frequent victims. InfoCLM, January 17, 2022; Ecologistas en Acción, April 19, 2018 and May 24, 2022.¹²⁵

January 31, 2022

Puerto Castilla, Province of Avila, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain



Seven traps made of approximately 4-mm-thick braided steel wire with a sliding knot without a brake, 2 cameras and liquid bait were seized. The poacher caught in the act of setting snares is under investigation.

El Español, February 17, 2022.¹²⁶

End of January 2022

Villanueva de la Fuente, Province of Ciudad Real, Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain



The poisoning of a dog and 3 cats triggers an investigation. Drastic steps are taken for the domestic animals. A toxin detection dog and a drone assist in finding the carcass of another victim, a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), and 7 poisoned baits. The poisoner will be brought to justice.

Onda Cero, February 18, 2022.¹²⁷

Early March 2022

Gran Canaria International Airport, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

Seizure of 29 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 5 common linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and 5 Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine) packed in a cage transported by a traveler coming from Seville and going to Telde. The individual was in possession of a transport certificate for 16 canaries (*Serinus canaria*). He had obtained the birds in the province of Huelva. This province is affected by avian influenza, so they were examined closely by veterinarians. Fourteen of them died as a result of the transport.

Canarias7 (with Europa Press), March 4, 2022.¹²⁸

End of March 2022

Cintruénigo, Chartered Community of Navarre, Spain

In the middle of an inspection of a classified installation for the protection of the environment, the environmental agents make an unexpected discovery: 7 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) in a cage. The owner is indicted. The birds regain their freedom. Diario de Noticias de Navarra (with Europa Press), March 22, 2022.¹²⁹

GREECE

December 31, 2021 - January 3, 2022

Orchomena, Region of Central Greece, Greece

Eleven peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) were found dead. An investigation is initiated by the Animal Welfare Volunteers of Orchomenos. Zoosos.gr, January 6, 2022.¹³⁰



**Early January 2022
Kalamata, Region of Peloponnese, Greece**

A female common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) less than one year old hops weakly in the industrial area. It had been shot. Despite all the care given to it in the wildlife centre KEPPAZ, it died after a few days.

Zoosos.gr, January 9, 2022.¹³¹



January 16, 2022

Alistrati, Region of Central Macedonia, Greece

It's not for lack of trying, but the attempted killing failed. The prognosis of the Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) hit by 8 pellets is not life threatening. Action for Wildlife is not sure whether it will be able to fly again, however.

Zoosos.gr, January 19, 2022.¹³²

January 17, 2022

Filoteia, Region of Central Macedonia, Greece

A common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) riddled with 25 bullets is taken in by Action for Wildlife. It died on January 26.

Zoosos.gr, 23 and 26 January 2022.¹³³

January 18, 2022

Municipality of East Mani, Region of Peloponnese, Greece

The GPS transmitter of the 2-year-old Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus*, Appendix II) nicknamed "Dragon" sends back an ominous static signal. BirdLife Greece expects the worst. The fears are confirmed. The carcass has already almost disappeared after some scavengers passed by. Only the wings were found. Their X-ray examination reveals the presence of several bullets.

LIFE Bonelli eastMed project, January 31, 2022.¹³⁴

End of January 2022

Aigion, Region of Western Greece, Greece

Agents of the Forestry Department hand over to ANIMA a female Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) with a bullet wound to the left wing.

ANIMA, January 31, 2022.¹³⁵



February 6, 2022

Perama, Region of Attica, Greece

Joint operation of forestry officers and police. Seizure at the Schisto market of serins (*Serinus serinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 17 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 4 wood larks (*Lullula arborea*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 4 common linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 2 red crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 2 Eurasian blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*, Appendix III in Ukraine), one coal tit (*Parus ater*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 24 European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), 4 cirl buntings (*Emberiza cirlus*), 4 hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), 3 great tits (*Parus major*), 2 black-headed buntings (*Emberiza melanocephala*), and a chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*). The birds were entrusted to the association Anima in order to be released. A songbird seizure already occurred in November at this market (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.170).

ANIMA, February 6, 2022; Left.gr, February 7, 2022.¹³⁶

Early February 2022

Agios Nikolaos, Region of Peloponnese, Greece

A couple discover a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) in a field with a deep head wound. Volunteers transport it to a wildlife care centre, but the bird dies before they reach it.

Maria Aroni, February 8, 2022.¹³⁷

February 13, 2022

Perama, Region of Attica, Greece

Back to Schisto market. The sellers have not given up. This time, not 100, but several hundred birds were confiscated by forestry officers and police. Among them were European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), serins (*Serinus serinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), and European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*).

Hellenic Ornithological Society, February 16, 2022.¹³⁸

February 15, 2022

Veikou Grove, Municipality of Galatsi, Region of Attica, Greece

Rescue by walkers of a Eurasian siskin (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine) covered with lime in the park of Veikou Grove. It was entrusted to the association Anima.

ANIMA, February 15, 2022.¹³⁹



3,826 birds poached or seized in Italy between January 1 and March 31, 2022, according to official and media sources



Sources: Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata ; Animali e ambiente nel cuore ; Associazione Giornalistica Radiotelevisiva ; Canale Dieci ; Casertaseira.it ; Corriere della Calabria ; Corriere Milano ; Dire ; Friuli Oggi ; Gazzetta di Mantova ; GenovaToday ; Giornale L'Orà ; Grandangolo ; Il Corrierino ; Ilfriuliveneziagiulia ; ilGiornale.it ; Il Gazzettino ; Il Portico ; ImperiaPost.it ; Italiaambiente ; La Sicilia ; La Voce di Rovigo ; L'Eco dell'Alto Molise e Alto Vastese ; LegnanoNews ; Logudorolive ; Olbiapuntoit ; Ottopagine ; Qdpnews Quotidiano del Piave ; QuiCosenza.it ; RavennaToday ; Telenord ; Vibo Sport ; Voce di Strada ; WWF.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Mid-March 2022

Cuneo, Province of Cuneo, Region of Piedmont, Italy



V.L. and F.M., husband and wife, living in Ivrea, Metropolitan City of Turin intended to get rich by appealing to the good intentions of exotic birds lovers through their website bird.future.overblog. Under the charitable pretext of saving the lives of parrots and parakeets (Psittaciformes, Appendix I or II except *Agapornis roseicollis*, *Melopsittacus undulatus*, *Nymphicus hollandicus* and *Psittacula krameri*) from a Cuban zoo about to close, interested buyers were invited to successively pay for insurance, certificates, customs, shipping... A woman from Villanova Mondovì (province of Cuneo) paid more than 2,500 € (2,800 US\$) to acquire birds. She never received them, and for good reason ; the story was totally fictitious. After her report, the carabinieri found the impostors thanks to their bank account. And surprise, V.L. and F.M. used the money to buy and trade... wholesale Covid masks. They were each sentenced to 8 months in prison and a fine of 400 € (450 US\$) for fraud.

La Guida, March 21, 2022; La Voce di Alba, March 21, 2022.¹⁴⁰

MALTA

January 28 and Early May 2022

Valletta, South Eastern Region, Malta



Two poachers were fined 2,300 € (2,600 US\$) and 2,000 € (2,270 US\$) and had their hunting and trapping licences revoked. They had been filmed in the act of catching chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) with clap nets in spring 2020.

At the beginning of May, the Court of Appeal revoked the 2,300 € fine handed down to Carl Busuttill on the grounds that there was not enough evidence. He claimed that the man filmed was "someone who looked a lot like him."

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, January 28, 2022; TVMnews.net, May 23, 2022.¹⁴¹



The 2 poachers picking up cages with decoy birds

February 4, 2022

Ghadira Nature Reserve, Mellieha, Northern Region, and Comino Island, Gozo Region, Malta

A Eurasian sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II) and a short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*, Appendix II) were released into the wild after a recovery period. The birds of prey had been found shot during the last hunting season.

BirdLife Malta, February 8 and 9, 2022.¹⁴²

March-Early May 2022

Gozo and Malta Islands, Malta



No less than 26 bird poaching sites in Malta and 19 in Gozo. Mtaħleb, Ġhargħur and Dingli, Northern Region, Mqabba and Marsaxlokk, South Eastern Region, Delimara, Southern Region and Munxar, Gozo Region are affected. About 50 "clap nets" up to 20 metres long, cages with live decoy birds and 9 electronic decoys were seized. Among the poachers' catches were finches (family Fringillidae), including common linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III en Ukraine), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) and chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*). Each can fetch 100 € (110 US\$) on the black market. In one month, the police dismantled 52 trapping sites, released more than 100 birds and confiscated 2 hunting rifles. A total of 34 poachers will be brought to justice.

After allowing finch trapping every autumn in recent years, under the guise of a "scientific" project, the government plans to lift the moratorium on spring hunting of turtle doves, which will reinforce Malta's international reputation as a "poaching State".

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, March 15 and 24 and April 5 and 9, 2022.¹⁴³



One of the trapping installation found at Mqabba was equipped with 5 pairs of clap nets operated from a single hide, making it the largest illegal bird trapping site ever found by CABS in Malta.

End of March 2022

Sigġiewi, Southern Region, Malta

Discovery by a walker of a kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II) with gunshot wounds. Poaching increases in intensity during the spring migration.

BirdLife Malta, March 31, 2022.¹⁴⁴



MONTENEGRO

February 15, 2022

Lužnica, Municipality of Podgorica, Montenegro

A person finds a dead Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) in his yard. It has several bullet wounds. CZIP (Centar za Zaštitu i Proučavanje Ptica, Center for the Protection and Study of Birds) filed a complaint against a person unknown and reiterates its request to the government to establish a moratorium on hunting at the national level.

Vijesti, February 16, 2022.¹⁴⁵

SERBIA

February 13, 2022

Sutjeska, Central Banat District, Serbia

Members of BirdLife Serbia discovered a mass grave not far from the Sutjeska pond on the banks of the Timis River, in an area with nests of white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) and common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II). The carcasses of 64 birds along with ammunition cartridges were strewn about. The 34 common buzzards, 21 great egrets (*Ardea alba*), 7 grey herons (*Ardea cinerea*), 2 great cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and 2 black woodpeckers (*Dryocopus martius*) died at various times, from 3 days to 3 months before the BirdLife visit.



The preferred hypothesis is that the culprit is a fisherman wanting to protect "his" fish stock from any winged competitors. It doesn't matter to him that buzzards don't eat fish.

BirdLife Serbia, February 14, 2022; Eko List, February 14, 2022; Danas (with BBC), February 18, 2022.¹⁴⁶

March 14, 2022

Veliki Gaj, Southern Banat District, Serbia. Border with Romania.

Nine buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), one little owl (*Athene noctua*, Appendix II) and one Eurasian magpie (*Pica pica*) are dead. The crime is marked. Beside them are poultry remains covered in a pink substance and a bottle labeled "Furadan," a carbofuran pesticide banned since 2014. The birds are believed to have been the accidental victims of a trap designed for foxes and chicken-loving stray dogs. Over the past 20 years, at least 2,000 birds have died of poisoning in the country, most of them by Furadan.

Telegraf, March 15, 2022; Danas, March 20, 2022; Vulture Conservation Foundation, March 21, 2022; Večernje novosti, April 4, 2022.¹⁴⁷



EASTERN EUROPE

BULGARIA

March 14, 2022

Ticha, Sliven Province, Bulgaria

Once again, the GPS transmitters have sounded the alarm. They are no longer working. Members of the NGO Fund for Wild Flora and Fauna go to the site. They discover the carcasses of 4 cinereous vultures (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II) and a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), obviously dead after feeding on the poisoned carcasses of 2 sheepdogs. The next day, the dog unit of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds inspects the site and discovers the poisoned carcasses of 2 golden jackals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India). This is a serious blow for cinereous vultures in Bulgaria. Three of them had been released as part of a reintroduction project. The fourth one, barely one year old, was the first individual born in the wild in 28 years.

e-burgas, March 15, 2022; Vulture Conservation Foundation, March 15 and 18, 2022.¹⁴⁸



HUNGARY

January 2, 2022

Szeged, Csongrád-Csanád County, Hungary

A little owl (*Athene noctua*, Appendix II) died in a rodent glue trap. The owl was attracted by a great tit (*Parus major*) and another passerine (order Passeriformes) also caught in the trap.

Sokszínnú vidék, January 7, 2022.¹⁴⁹



February 22, 2022

Salgótarján, Nógrád County, Hungary

Seizure of 9 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and 5 Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine) from a 74-year-old man who had caught them. Their value is estimated to be worth 25,000 forints (75 US\$) on the local market. They were handed over to the staff of Bükk National Park.

Hungarian Police, April 8, 2022.¹⁵⁰

March 18, 2022

Győr, Győr-Moson-Sopron County, Hungary

During an argument, a husband trampled the cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) cherished by his wife. He also mistreated her 2 parakeets and violently hit his daughter and a neighbour who tried to protect them. He is indicted.

The Prosecution Service of Hungary, March 18, 2022.¹⁵¹

POLAND

January 12, 2022

Tarnów, Lesser Poland Voivodeship, Poland

Seizure of a Eurasian siskin (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), and 2 chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) in a cage at the home of a 62-year-old man. He had placed a trap cage on a plot of land near his property. The birds were released, and the man was questioned by the police.

Malopolska Police, January 19, 2022.¹⁵²



March 14, 2022

Michów, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland

Two men aged 39 and 68 were arrested after a search of their farm. Police officers found 13 traps and a trap cage meant to capture northern goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II). They confined live pigeons as bait. The suspects were released after posting bail of 600 zlotys (145 US\$).

Lublin Police, March 15, 2022.¹⁵³



ROMANIA

March 12, 2022

Panticeu, Cluj County, Romania

A 55-year-old man runs a juicy wild bird business via Facebook and the OLX classifieds site. "Possible delivery abroad." Members of the anti-poaching association ANCBP Antibraconaj si Antipoluare Cluj pretend to be interested and then report their exchanges to the police. The police search his home and find 28 caged birds in an annex, including Eurasian bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Appendix III in Ukraine), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), and Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine). Captured in autumn, they are considered fit for release.

Stiri de Cluj, March 13, 2022; Actual de Cluj, March 15, 2022; Monitorul Cluj, March 16, 2022.¹⁵⁴



RUSSIA

End of January 2022

Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Russia



Seizure of a Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) in an apartment. It was in very bad health and had a fractured wing. It died a few days later.

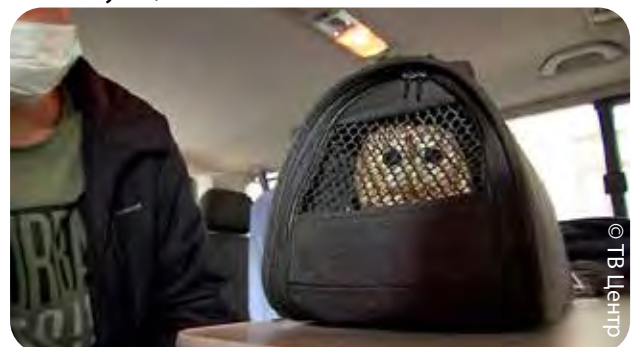
The Center for Rehabilitation and Reintroduction of Tigers and Other Rare Animals, February 1 and 9, 2022.¹⁵⁵

February 17, 2022

Moscow Federal City, Russia

Following reports, a man offering to take paid photos with a tawny owl (*Strix aluco*, Appendix II) on the street was arrested at 8:58 p.m. The visibly mistreated owl was handed over to a rehabilitation centre.

TV Centre, February 18, 2022; Moskovskaya Pravda, February 22, 2022.¹⁵⁶



February 19, 2022

Astrakhan, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia

A resident reports the presence of dead white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) in a garden. They are in fact 2 stuffed eagles used as scarecrows by a Cossack, who tried to prevent their removal by scientific experts. Checheninfo, February 19, 2022.¹⁵⁷

February 25, 2022

Rostov-on-Don, Rostov Oblast, Russia

Another white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) used to earn some money on the street. Its "owner" had cut off its tail feathers in the hope that the authorities would not be able to identify its species in case of a check, but he had underestimated the experts of the Rosprirodnadzor (Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources). He was fined.

Don-TR, February 25, 2022.¹⁵⁸



Mid-March 2022

Tyumen, Tyumen Oblast, Russia

The city zoo was fined 250,000 rubles (2,430 US\$) for the unlicensed keeping and display of cinereous vultures (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II), steppe eagles (*Aquila nipalensis*, Appendix II) and griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II).

Interfax Russia, March 16, 2022; Tumen Today, March 16, 2022.¹⁵⁹



March 16, 2022

Federal City of Saint Petersburg, Russia

By decision of the Kalininsky District Court, the website pages of Наша планета ("Our Planet") offering to buy white-necked crane (*Grus vipio*, Appendix I) and bar-headed geese (*Anser indicus*) without certificates are now unavailable.

Regnum, March 16, 2022.¹⁶⁰

March 30, 2022

Krasnodar, Krasnodar Krai, Russia

By court decision, a site offering to buy a boreal owl (*Aegolius funereus*, Appendix II) is blocked. Very discreet, boreal owls live in the coniferous forests of the northern hemisphere. They are especially threatened by deforestation.

GTRK Kuban, March 30, 2022.¹⁶¹

SLOVAKIA

End of March 2022

Záhorie Area, Bratislava, Trnava and Trencin Regions, Slovakia

Discovery of 3 poisoned red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II). According to the NGO Raptor Protection of Slovakia, the poisoned bait was indeed targeting raptors.

Raptor Protection of Slovakia, March 29, 2022; Enviroportal, March 30, 2022.¹⁶²



CZECHIA

February 5 and 8, 2022

Klatovy District, Plzeň Region, Czechia

This is the first known poisoning of the year in the country. The victims were 2 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and a red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). They died after eating pieces of meat presumably sprinkled with carbofuran, which were ostensibly placed on a straw bale. Three days later, the dog unit of the Czech Ornithological Society inspected the area and found another buzzard and another fox.

In early April, the police announced that they were closing the case. Since 2017, the Czech Ornithological Society has recorded 104 cases of poisoning that killed 488 animals. Only one person has been convicted (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.195). Ekolist.cz, February 21 and April 7, 2022; Enviweb, February 26, 2022.¹⁶³



UKRAINE

February 4, 2022

Boryspil International Airport, Kyiv, Ukraine

Airport security inspectors spot a suspicious bag. An X-ray reveals the silhouettes of 4 falcons. When they opened the bag, they discovered 4 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) or saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) which had been anesthetized, swaddled, tied up, blindfolded and their legs taped up. The owner of the bag cannot be found. He was to leave for Doha (Qatar).

Two of the falcons died within half an hour. The 2 others had to be placed under oxygen for several hours to recover. After several days of recuperation, they were released.

Ukraine Customs, February 4 and 17, 2022.¹⁶⁴



March 28, 2022
Mykolaiv, Mykolaiv Oblast, Ukraine



In the city of Mykolaiv, affected by the fighting, a resident of the Kazarsky district hears strange noises in an abandoned shed. She pushes the door. Inside, there is a dead dog and 6 hungry birds of prey. She immediately contacts the NGO Phoenix, which alerts the police, the military guard, and the city zoo. The 5 white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) and the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) are evacuated to the zoo in the middle of the night despite the curfew. As for their "owner," no one knows where he went. It is probably a raptor showman.

Korabelov.INFO, March 29, 2022; Novosti N, March 29, 2022.¹⁶⁵

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIE

January 20, 2022
State of Western Australia, Australia

More than 10 hectares of habitat for the slender-billed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*, Appendix II), white-tailed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*, Appendix II), and red-tailed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus banksii naso*, Appendix II) have been cleared by 3 developers. Novalee Nominees Pty Ltd, Estates 77 Pty Ltd, and Spatial Property Group Pty Ltd will be required to pay 250,000 AUD (160,320 US\$) as part of an enforceable undertaking. As an alternative to a fine, the undertaking provides funding for the protection and conservation of protected species whose habitats have been destroyed.

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, January 28, 2022.¹⁶⁶



Mid-February 2022
Cockburn, State of Western Australia, Australia



37 little corellas (*Cacatua sanguinea*, Appendix II) poisoned with the insecticide fenthion were admitted to the Bibra Lake Wildlife Hospital. Only 11 specimens survived. Rescuers released them well away from Cockburn in the hope that they would not fall victim to human conflict again.

Little corellas are considered noisy and a nuisance by local residents and are regularly the target of poisoning attempts (see for example "On the Trail" n°26 p.47). The populations can be "kept under control" in agreement with the authorities, but only with the help of firearms. The use of fenthion has been banned since 2015.

ABC News, March 17, 2022; Fremantle Herald Interactive, April 1, 2022.¹⁶⁷



Boreal owl (*Aegolius funereus*), cf. page 145

VARIOUS REPTILE SPECIES

AMERICA

BELIZE

**March 2022
Belize**

Poachers posted videos on social networks of killings of green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and Central American river turtles (*Dermatemys mawii*, Appendix II). A licence is required to hunt iguanas and the season is closed from February to June. In addition, it is prohibited to possess more than 3 turtles, to capture or sell females over 45 cm and under 38 cm or to transport more than 5 individuals in a vehicle.

Breaking Belize News, March 12, 2022.¹



BRAZIL

**March 17, 2022
Rio de Janeiro, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**



There is a commotion in the neighbourhood of Padre Miguel this Thursday morning. Environmental policemen and municipal agents entered the house of Caio César Viana de Faria, aged 26. They came out with the young man under arrest, a tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II), 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*), 17 leopard geckos (*Eublepharis macularius*) and leopard gecko eggs, as well as incubators, and insects and rodents used to feed the reptiles. The animals were entrusted to the municipal park of Marapendi, in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro.

Leopard geckos are native to the Middle East. See "On the Trail" n°5 p.31-32, n°20 p.128, n°21 p.112, n°25 p.109, n°28 p.40, n°29 p.132 and p.141 and n°32 p.216.

G1 Rio, March 17, 2022.²

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**January 27 and February 22, 2022
Miami, State of Florida, United States of America**



Daisuke Miyauchi, owner of Maniac Reptiles, located in Yokohama, Japan, frequently travelled to the United States to purchase reptiles from Chun Ku. The owner of Dynasty Reptiles in Miami used his permit to fraudulently export various reptiles of protected species: blood pythons (*Python brongersmai*, Appendix II), royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), burrowing pythons (*Loxocemus bicolor*, Appendix II), black-and-white tegus (*Salvator merianae*, Appendix II) and knob-tailed geckos (genus *Nephruroides*). Between October 2014 and August 2021, 39 consignments were illegally shipped to Miyauchi by falsifying documents, and at least 20 were to another customer, with a total value of 5,134,170 US\$. Miyauchi was sentenced to 13 months' imprisonment, followed by 2 years' supervised release and a fine of 10,000 US\$. Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, January-February, March and April 2022.³

**Week of February 7, 2022
McIntosh, State of Florida, United States of America**

They were floating belly up at the surface. Three American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II), 17 turtles and 2 snakes were found in Orange Lake by fishermen. Necropsy revealed that they had died of external trauma from being crushed. Florida Fish and Wildlife is investigating. WCJB, February 11 and 16, 2022.⁴

**Mid-February 2022
Collier County, State of Florida, United States of America**

A facility without the required licences housed 2 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 2 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), 4 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), a tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II) and a red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). Five misdemeanour citations were issued for illegal possession and 11 warnings for related violations. The animals were seized pending the outcome of the court proceedings.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, February 17, 2022.⁵

February 23, 2022

Valdosta, State of Georgia, United States of America



Ashtyn Michael Rance, aged 33, is sentenced to 33 months in prison followed by 3 years of supervised release and a fine of 4,300 US\$. He is also prohibited from keeping and selling wild animals. In early 2018, he had shipped 16 spotted turtles (*Clemmys guttata*, Appendix II), 3 common box turtles (*Terrapene carolina carolina*, Appendix II), and 15 Gaboon vipers (*Bitis gabonica*) to Florida from Georgia under false names, with China as the final destination. He had also legally imported 220 venomous snakes from Africa for sale, and illegally kept 16 at his home. For all the details, see "On the Trail" n°32 p.109.

US Department of Justice, February 24, 2022.⁶

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 25, 2022

San Ysidro Port of Entry, San Diego, State of California, United States of America. Border with Mexico.



Jose Manuel Perez, aged 30, from California, crosses the border at San Ysidro for the 36th time in one year. Already at the beginning of the month, he had been stopped by Mexican customs officers with 2 accomplices and 15 turtles, 12 snakes, and 8 chameleons. He had finally recovered the animals and was able to enter California with them because "they were his." This warning had not discouraged him.

But this time, he was less lucky. More than 50 reptiles, hidden in bags and in his clothes were seized among which (species vary according to sources) there were 3 dwarf boas (*Tropidophiidae*, Appendix II), a Uribe's false cat-eyed snake (*Leptodeira uribei*), a Pacific Coast parrot snake (*Leptophis diplotropis*), 4 conehead lizards (genus *Laemactus*), and 43 horned lizards (genus *Phrynosoma*).

Under surveillance for months, Perez is accused of importing 1,700 animals between January 2016 and February 2022, including monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp, Appendix I or II), juvenile crocodiles (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), beaded lizards (*Heloderma horridum*, Appendix I or II), common box turtles (subspecies *Terrapene carolina yucatana* and *Terrapene carolina mexicana*, Appendix II) and smooth helmeted iguanas (*Corytophanes cristatus*). He picked them up at the airport in Ciudad Juárez and used to return to the United States via El Paso, Texas. Occasionally, he would hire others to provide transport, such as when he was in prison for theft. The economic value of all the animals is estimated at 739,000 US\$.

The reptiles were sold on Facebook on the account of "Julio Rodriguez," a pseudonym, with advertisements targeting the accounts of reptile "fans." They were then shipped by FedEx, under the company name Reptiles Express.

On March 24, Jose Manuel Perez and his sister Stephany were charged with wildlife trafficking. The San Diego Union-Tribune, March 3, 2022; US Customs and Border Protection, March 8, 2022; Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, March 2022.⁷

End of February 2022

Wekiva Park, Longwood, State of Florida, United States of America

Two couples stole kayaks and attempted to capture small American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) and turtles from their boats. The 4 people also attempted to stone several migratory birds. They are being prosecuted for theft and attempted poaching. In addition, they are banned from the park for 2 years.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, February 24, 2022.⁸

March 30, 2022

Somerset, State of Kentucky, United States of America



Timothy Charles Lorraine, aged 62, is sentenced to one year in prison, suspended for 2 years, and fined 7,100 US\$ for animal cruelty, buying, selling, or transporting protected wildlife, as well as resident commercial license violation. 150 exotic animals, including an African spurred tortoise (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), fish, 80 small rodents (gerbils, hamsters, chinchillas, rabbits, guinea pigs), snakes, and other turtles had been seized on September 1, 2021 in his pet shop Tim's Reptiles and Exotics (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.214).

Commonwealth Journal, April 5, 2022.⁹

PERU

January 25, 2022

Province of Pasco, Department of Pasco, Peru

Seizure of 4 live boas (*Boa* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 snake skins and 2 stuffed crocodile heads (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) at a fair in the Chaupimarca district. The boas were displayed in a suitcase on one of the stalls along with ointments with alleged medicinal properties made from snake fat.

Serfor, January 25, 2022.¹⁰

ASIA

INDIA

January 7, 2022

Kundalwadi, Nanded District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure during an operation conducted by the WCCB and the Forest Department of 10 snakes of various unspecified species (9 alive and one dead) and an Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) held by an individual.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 10, 2022.¹¹

ISRAEL

March 20, 2022

Ben Gurion International Airport, Central District, Israel

A resident of Petah Tikva is arrested upon arrival at the airport. He was returning from Europe. He was suspected of drug trafficking but investigators found something very different in his suitcase: about 20 small snakes, lizards, and turtles, including snapping turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*, Appendix III in the United States of America) or alligator snapping turtles (*Macrolemys temminckii*, Appendix III in the United States of America) carefully wrapped up in socks. The animals were handed over to the environmental authorities.

Panet, March 21, 2022; Israel Hayom, March 22, 2022; Israel Nature and Parks Authority, March 22, 2022.¹²



PHILIPPINES

February 18, 2022

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines

Seizure of a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 6 black-and-white tegus (*Salvator merianae*, Appendix II) and 2 Central bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*) in a parcel stamped "commercial samples". They were taken to the Regional Wildlife Rescue Centre of the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Centre in Quezon City. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, March 13, 2022.¹³



The reptiles were travelling in plastic boxes

VIET NAM

February 24, 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

Seizure of 100 leopard geckos (*Eublepharis macularius*), 10 Eastern bearded dragons (*Pogona barbata*) and 2 common kingsnakes (*Lampropeltis getula*) that the man was displaying and selling on his YouTube channel. All these animals are exotic. He had bought them illegally on the Internet. Fine of 1,660 US\$. ENV, February 24, 2022.¹⁴

facebook



EUROPE

BELGIUM

January 12, 2022

Brussels, Brussels Capital Region, Belgium

Three individuals were sentenced to 6 to 8-month suspended prison terms and fines of 1,200 € to 8,000 € (1,360 to 9,070 US\$). The first had attempted to import 3 kg of crocodile meat (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the second a boa constrictor skin (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) from Colombia, and the third turtle carcasses from Ethiopia. They had all been arrested at Brussels airport.

Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, December 14, 2021; VRT, January 12, 2022; Afrik 21, January 14, 2022.¹⁵



February 2022

Frasnes-lez-Anvaing, Province of Hainaut, Walloon Region, Belgium

Alphabiotoxin houses seized or surrendered venomous animals and extracts the venom by massaging the snakes, and subjecting the scorpions or tarantulas to low-level electrical stimulation that would not harm the animal, according to the director, a statement that is open to question. Electrical stimulation can be painful and lethal. Alphabiotoxin produces venoms from cobras (family Elapidae), cane toads (*Rhinella marina*), tarantulas and scorpions. Fourmy says he is concerned about an influx of reptiles into his facility since a list of reptiles allowed in domestic homes was released in late January 2021. "At some point, the lab is going to be saturated with species that may have no relevance to its business." The Animal Welfare Unit of the Walloon Public Service has launched a call for projects to increase the capacity for "off-list" reptiles.

The list of reptiles that can be kept in Wallonia includes 121 species of lizards, 85 species of snakes and 51 species of tortoises or turtles. For 11 species of lizards and 8 species of tortoises or turtles, certain conditions must be respected (veterinary certificate and, more rarely, registration in a collective breeding and safeguarding programme for the species). Compliance with these rules does not exempt compliance with CITES regulations.

RTL, February 14, 2022.¹⁶

February 2, 2022

La Louvière, Province of Hainaut, Walloon Region, Belgium

Seizure in a private home of 17 snakes including a reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), 8 geckos (infraorder Gekkota), 4 tarantulas, a scorpion and 20 rats for snakes.

Sudinfo, February 4, 2022.¹⁷

SPAIN

OPERATION NAJA-GC

End of February 2022

Telde, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

This is one of the largest reptile seizures from a private individual in Europe ever made. The suspect had 53 animals from all over the world in his home, mostly reptiles. Among them were an African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I), a Chinese crocodile lizard (*Shinisaurus crocodilurus*, Appendix I), 3 caimans (Alligatoridae, Appendix I or II) including 2 Cuvier's smooth-fronted caimans (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*, Appendix II), a rhinoceros iguana (*Cyclura cornuta*, Appendix I), a Sierra Madre forest monitor (*Varanus bitatawa*, Appendix II), a blue tree monitor (*Varanus macraei*, Appendix II), a yellow-spotted monitor (*Varanus panoptes*, Appendix II), a Nile monitor (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II), 2 yellow tree monitors (*Varanus reisingeri*, Appendix II), 2 quince monitors (*Varanus melinus*, Appendix II), 2 emerald monitors

(*Varanus prasinus*, Appendix II), a Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*, Appendix II), 2 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), a king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II), a Philippine cobra (*Naja philippinensis*, Appendix II), a monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II), an alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*, Appendix III in the United States of America), 2 central bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*), an eastern blue-tongued lizard (*Tiliqua scincoides*), 11 California kingsnakes (*Lampropeltis californiae*), a Cape cobra (*Naja nivea*), a spitting cobra (genus *Naja*), a Gaboon viper (*Bitis gabonica*), a nose-horned viper (*Vipera ammodytes*), 2 rattlesnakes (genus *Crotalus*), and a Western green mamba (*Dendroaspis viridis*). There were also insects and rodents for food, plus a Mexican redknee tarantula (*Brachypelma smithi*, Appendix II), a Chilean rose tarantula (*Grammostola rosea*), and 2 black-tufted marmosets (*Callithrix penicillata*, Appendix II).

The investigation had begun in late 2021. To confirm their suspicions, the authorities sent a drone over the suspect's property and they saw an alligator. He was arrested along with a well-known trafficker. The case is all the more serious because the hospitals in the Canary Islands do not have an antidote to the potentially deadly venom of 12 of the confiscated snakes. The animals were entrusted to the rescue centre Cocodrilos Park.

Guardia Civil, February 26, 2022.¹⁸

FRANCE

FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 17, 2022

Chalon-sur-Saône, Department of Saône-et-Loire, France



The 2 brothers developed a consuming "passion" for reptiles after a trip to Africa where one of them had bought a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II). Since then, they had purchased other reptiles on Leboncoin from sellers in the Jura or in a Belgian pet shop. They occasionally provided "courses" to firemen on how to handle dangerous reptiles. But they did not have a certificate of competence or any legal identification document for their reptiles.

In October 2020, an Asiatic rock python (*Python molurus*, Appendix I or II), a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix I or II), a Cuvier's smooth-fronted caiman (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*, Appendix II), and an African spurred tortoise (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II) were seized (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.155) from them.

One of them was sentenced to 7 months of suspended imprisonment and a fine of 200 € (225 US\$) and the other to 5 months of suspended imprisonment and a fine of 400 € (450 US\$).

Le Journal de Saône-et-Loire, January 17, 2022.¹⁹

HUNGARY

March 28, 2022

Kecskemét, Bács-Kiskun County, Hungary

The 47-year-old man had "always been motivated by his love for animals." This strange love drove him to ship European reptiles to Japan, tightly packed in their boxes, and to provide fake certificates of ability to their future owners whose skills he could hardly assess.

The police put an end to his trafficking by seizing 73 reptiles from his home: European pond turtles (*Emys orbicularis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Milos wall lizards (*Podarcis milensis*), Italian wall lizards (*Podarcis siculus*), Gallot's lizards (*Gallotia galloti*), common midwife toads (*Alytes obstetricans*), painted frogs (*Discoglossus pictus*), common grass snakes (*Natrix natrix*), dice snakes (*Natrix tessellata*), leopard ratsnakes (*Zamenis situla*), four-lined snakes (*Elaphe quatuorlineata*), Balkan green lizards (*Lacerta trilineata*) and European glass lizards (*Pseudopus apodus*).

The animals are estimated to have an economic value of 25 to 50,000 forints each (75 to 150 US\$), for a total amount of more than 2 million forints (6,140 US\$). He stated that he bought them at an international auction.

24.hu, March 28, 2022; Origo, March 28, 2022.²⁰



TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES

Most important seizures of the quarter:

4,065 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II)
1,629 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I)
1,002 black-bellied sliders (*Trachemys dorsalis*)

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

End of January 2022

Beahitse, Atsimo-Andrefana Region, Madagascar

The shell are pierced with holes to tie them together or hinder their legs with sticks. Thirty-seven juvenile radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) were seized. They were destined for the food market and the poachers did not care about their physical integrity. They were arrested. The tortoises were transported to the Lavavolo centre, joining the 15,000 or so survivors of the black market, most of whom were rescued in April and October 2018 (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.19 and n° 23 p.25). Turtle Survival Alliance, January 15, 2022; L'Express de Madagascar, January 22, 2022.¹



Constraint and restraint practice

February 21, 2022

Fianarantsoa, Haute Matsiatra Region, Madagascar

Seizure in a cardboard box of 29 baby tortoises (Testudinidae, Appendix I or II) transported in a bush-taxi on the RN7. Coming from Toliara, the driver had loaded the package in Ihosy to reach Antananarivo. In the absence of the owner, the vehicle was towed to the police station for further investigation.

Midi Madagasikara, February 22, 2022.²

March 27, 2022

Beheloke, Atsimo-Andrefana Region, Madagascar

Seizure of 72 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) and 4 spider tortoises (*Pyxis arachnoides*, Appendix I). They were reportedly caught near Lavololo.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, March 30, 2022.³



SUDAN

January 2022

Berber, River Nile State, Sudan

The Anti-Smuggling Department seized 33 turtles and 43 camels, 35 females and 8 males, bound for "a neighbouring country." Seven arrests. Kush News, January 15, 2022.⁴

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

February 2022

Cuyahoga County, State of Ohio, United States of America

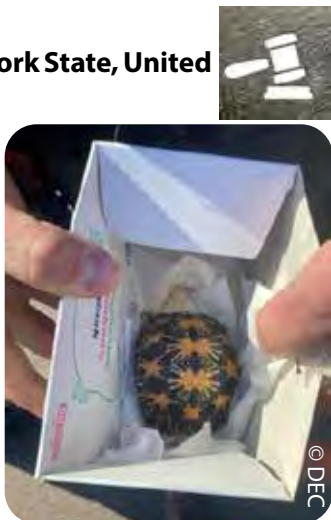
Seizure of a gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*, Appendix II) that a man had collected in Florida and brought back to Ohio as a souvenir. It was given to a zoo and will never return to the wild. The Scioto Post, May 17, 2022.⁵

March 16, 2022

Queens County, New York State, United States of America

In February a man published an ad to sell a radiated tortoise (*Aspachelys radiata*, Appendix I) for 2,000 US\$. He was tricked by an undercover inspector. Instead of pocketing 2,000 US\$, he paid a fine of 2,000 US\$. The tortoise was entrusted to Bronx Zoo.

Department of Environmental Conservation, May 25, 2022.⁶



March 18, 2022

Jackson County, State of Kentucky, United States of America

"I have an endless supply of them here." 246 common box turtles (*Terrapene carolina*, Appendix II) were seized from Christopher Cool (59). The poacher had been selling them to Chinese people for between 80 and 200 US\$ each. Involved in the reptile trade for more than 20 years, the trafficker saw his business skyrocket when he posted a photo of one of them on the Facebook page of a turtle-lovers group. Cool shipped a total of 599 turtles to New York to 2 main buyers between July 2019 and July 2020, for a price of 62,219 US\$. Another 70 were brought in his Chevrolet Tahoe to a buyer in Pennsylvania for 7,000 US\$. He was sentenced to 15 months in prison and 80 hours of community service.

Lexington Herald Leader, September 16, 2021; US Department of Justice, March 18, 2022.⁷



LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 10, 2022

Pelotas, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



Hidden in a suitcase under clothes, nearly a thousand baby black-bellied sliders (*Trachemys dorbigni*) were seized in the boot of a Chevrolet Prisma on the BR 116 highway. The couple from Santa Catarina had bought them at the border with Uruguay and were going to sell them at their home in Florianópolis. The 2 traffickers, aged 28, were arrested and the turtles were sent to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre of the Federal University of Pelotas (UFPEL) in the hope of returning them to the wild.

Correio do Povo, February 11, 2022.⁸

February 24, 2022

Cruzeiro do Oeste, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure of 9 one-day-old baby and 3 adult tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II). The individual was fined 6,000 reais (1,260 US\$). G1 PR, February 25, 2022.⁹



COLOMBIA

Mid-February 2022

Department of Santander, Colombia

Seizure in a cooler traveling on a public bus of 33 cut-up Colombian sliders (*Trachemys venusta*) and 200 eggs. Arrest of a young man, aged 18, who was the owner of the cooler. Diana Carolina Pérez, veterinarian of the Regional Corporation for the Defense of the Bucaramanga Plateau recalls that "The wild fauna must be protected and cared for, each species playing a very important role in each ecosystem to which it belongs." She adds that the population of Colombian sliders has decreased by 30% or more in recent years due to overexploitation and degradation of their habitat.

RCN Radio, February 15, 2022.¹⁰



ECUADOR

March 2, 2022

Guayaquil, Guayas Province, Ecuador

Arrest and sentencing of a woman to one year in prison for the possession of 13 yellow-headed sidenecks (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) intended to be sold. The turtles were seized and entrusted to a wildlife management centre.

El Comercio, March 2, 2022.¹¹



GUYANA

February 3, 2022

Guyana

Seizure of yellow-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II) and red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II) displayed for sale without a licence, hanging from a display stand. The tortoises were handed over to the GWCMC.

Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission, February 3, 2022; Stabroek News, February 4, 2022.¹²



Tortoises on display like objects

ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 16, 2022

Kien Svay District, Kandal Province, Cambodia

No less than 1,017 adult turtles, 2,000 hatchlings and 2,210 eggs were seized in a minibus. The 2 men who illegally imported them from Viet Nam, Som Saroeun (28) and Keo To (38), from Romeas Haek district in Svay Rieng province, were arrested and will be tried.

Khmer Times, February 18, 2022.¹³

INDIA

January 4, 2022

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India

The shipment declared to contain 230 kg of live crabs actually contained 1,364 live Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I) bound for Malaysia. They were handed over to the Tamil Nadu Forest Department.

The Hindu, January 5, 2022; The New Indian Express, January 6, 2022.¹⁴

January 9, 2022

Basirhat, North 24 Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India

Seizure by WCCB and Forest Department of 72 live Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) from Natun Bazar market. In other words, they were destined to end up in cooking pots.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 10, 2022.¹⁵

January 13, 2022

Gaya, Gaya District, State of Bihar, India

Seizure of 61 turtles (unspecified species) in 4 compartments of the Yog Nagari Rishikesh express train linking Rishikesh in Uttarakhand to Howrah in West Bengal in a span of 34 hours. No trafficker was arrested.

News Wing, January 13, 2022.¹⁶

January 24, 2022

Siliguri, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India

Arrest of Bittu Das at the Siliguri market where he was selling 2 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) collected in the State of Bihar. They are entrusted to the Bengal Safari Park zoo.

The Telegraph India, January 25, 2022.¹⁷

January 28, 2022

Balamau, Hardoi District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

After receiving a tip-off, the police intervene at the Balamau railway station and arrest a man named Qamar. He was transporting 200 live turtles to Ludhiana, Punjab State (more than 700 km away). He confessed that this was not his first attempt. He took the turtles in Mallawaan from a woman named Rehana. The police also seize a telephone and 14,000 rupees (188 US\$)

The Times of India, January 30, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 31, 2022.¹⁸

Early February 2022

State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Selvakumar Ravikumar is arrested in possession of 250 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I).

India Today, February 5, 2022.¹⁹

February 5, 2022

Naugachia, Bhagalpur District, State of Bihar, India

Always the same story. Traffickers from the West, especially from Uttar Pradesh, try to smuggle turtles to West Bengal to sell them for profit. But when the 19305 Ambedkar Nagar Kamakhya Weekly Express train stopped at Naugachia station for 16 minutes, the police inspected coaches and luggage and got hold of 935 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) hidden in 42 bags. Eight arrests, including 5 women. Estimated value: 1.6 million rupees (21,320 US\$).

Dainik Jagran, 5 February 2022; PiPa News, 5 February 2022.²⁰



On the night of February 5-6, 2022

Kamakhya, Kamrup Metropolitan District, State of Assam, India

Train 19305 is still in the news. At its terminus at Kamakhya Station, the Railway Protection Force spotted 10 abandoned pieces of luggage. They contained 235 turtles, mainly Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II). The Bihar police had not had time to find them... They are entrusted to the Gauhati Zoo.

Northeast Now, February 6, 2022.²¹

February 6, 2022

Kanpur, Kanpur Nagar District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure in the trailer of a truck of 1,878 live Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II). They were packed in 49 jute bags. Arrest of the 2 drivers, Javed Haider and Mohd Farukh. They had been paid 60,000 rupees (799 US\$) for transporting the flapshell turtles from Etawah, where they were collected, to West Bengal, from where they would have been shipped to Bangladesh, Myanmar and China.

According to an official of the Special Task Force (STF), 29 species of turtles live in India, including 15 in Uttar Pradesh.

Hindustan Times, February 6, 2022; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), February 8, 2022.²²

February 14, 2022

Lucknow, Lucknow District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Search of a pick-up truck on Mohan Road. Inside, in 6 bags, 318 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II). Arrest of "Michel", a passenger of the vehicle. His accomplices managed to escape. "Michel" explains that the turtles were collected in Unnao district in Uttar Pradesh and that he was going to deliver them to Sultanpur, a journey of more than 200 km.

Hindustan Times, February 15, 2022.²³

February 15, 2022

Gorakhpur, Gorakhpur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Ravi Kumar, sitting inside the station with his 5 to 6 pieces of luggage, attracted the attention of the police. When they came to question him, he ran away. Finally caught, he was searched and 426 turtles were found inside his luggage. He explained that he had bought them for 50 rupees/kg (0.66 US\$/kg) in Sultanpur (Uttar Pradesh) and wanted to go to the State of West Bengal to sell them for 350 rupees/kg (4.66 US\$/kg). One kilo is equivalent to one or 2 turtles.

The India Print, February 15, 2022; Asian News International, February 16, 2022.²⁴

February 15, 2022

Varanasi, Varanasi District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

The gang of smugglers of turtles to West Bengal via the railway stations of Uttar Pradesh has struck again. This time it was at Cantt Railway Station in Varanasi. Four men, Aslam Khan aka Jumman, Gopal Sarkar, Raju and Babulal attempted to smuggle Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) crammed into 7 bags. Aslam is no novice, he has reportedly already made 10 to 15 deliveries. Additional seizure of 5 telephones and 3,940 rupees in cash (52 US\$).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), February 16, 2022.²⁵

February 17, 2022

Gaya, Gaya District, State of Bihar, India

The 3 women were carrying 140 live Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) on the train during a business trip of sorts. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) officers were informed about this. They brought the traffickers down and into the hands of the federal Government Railway Police.

Railway Protection Force, February 18, 2022.²⁶

Night of February 26 to 27, 2022

Vadarlapadu, Krishna District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

The check of the car and the van reveals 724 turtles distributed in 25 jute bags. Four tonnes in total. Arrest of the 3 occupants of the vehicles: Pantagani Nagbhushanam, aged 48, Garikimukku Sandeep, aged 30, and Devadasu Aesubabu, aged 27. They had bought the turtles nearby for 15 rupees each (0.19 US\$) and intended to sell them in other States like West Bengal for 50 to 100 rupees (0.66 to 1.32 US\$).

Samayam Telugu, February 28, 2022; The Hans India, February 28, 2022; The New Indian Express, February 28, 2022.²⁷

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 28, 2022

Bengaluru, Bengaluru Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

Ravichandar, aged 56, was not waiting for the bus. He was waiting to find a buyer for his 2 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I). He had already been arrested in December 2021 while trying to sell parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II).

The Hindu, March 1, 2022.²⁸

March 4, 2022

Narkatiaganj, West Champaran District, State of Bihar, India



Seizure of 205 turtles hidden in 4 pillowcases in the toilet of the Satyagrah Express from Delhi to Bihar. The Government Railway Police was not acting on a tip but as part of routine inspections to confiscate alcohol. No arrests were made.

ETV Bharat, March 4, 2022; Hindustan Times, March 5, 2022.²⁹

March 10, 2022

Malkangiri Potteru 81 Village, Malkangiri District, State of Odisha, India

Arrest of Prakash Tarafdar and Abhijit Bala who were carrying 25 freshwater turtles, probably Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II), on their motorcycle. They had picked them up in Andra Pradesh with the intention of selling them in the district. They were released in the Satiguda reservoir.

Ommcom News, March 11, 2022; Pragativadi, March 11, 2022.³⁰

March 15, 2022

Bengaluru, Bengaluru Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

Arrest of Mohammed Haroon, aged 27, who was selling 2 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I) on the roadside. They were handed over to the Bannerghatta Rescue Centre.

The Hindu, March 15, 2022.³¹



Night of March 15 to 16, 2022

Kiratpur, Auraiya District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Arrest of Suraj and seizure of 709 freshwater turtles, probably Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) that the man was planning to carry to north-eastern India, i.e. West Bengal. Poaching and smuggling of turtles are on the rise in Etawah, Mainpuri, and Auraiya districts. Police and the Forest Department are seeking details on the organization of the criminal gang.

The Times of India, March 17, 2022.³²

Night of March 24 to 25, 2022

Ajni, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

Arrest of Durgesh Ramawath Shukla, aged 34, Shubham Kailash Pulewar, aged 25, and Shivam Rajkumar Awathi, aged 21, who were trying to sell 6 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I).

The Live Nagpur, March 25, 2022.³³

INDONESIA

March 8, 2022

Payakumbuh, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Arrest of Mr. I. H. and seizure of 472 pig-nosed turtles (*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II) and 6 Asian giant tortoises (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II). Some of the pig-nosed turtles are still juveniles and require special attention. It is planned to repatriate them as soon as possible to Papua in their natural habitat.

Mongabay, March 19, 2022.³⁴



THAILAND

February 4, 2022

Mae Sot Border Post, Tak Province, Thailand. Border with Myanmar.

Seizure of 20 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) found in an abandoned box. The perpetrator cannot be found.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, February 4, 2022.³⁵

March 20, 2022

Chang Raek Sub-District, Bang Saphan Noi District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand

Arrest of Somphit Khambanlue, aged 62, caught in the act during a poaching party. Seizure of a yellow-headed tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), a shotgun, 11 cartridges and a headlamp.

Khaosod Online, March 20, 2022.³⁶

VIET NAM

January 1, 2022

Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam

The car parked in a neighbourhood of Bac Tu Liem district had some surprises for the police who found in the trunk, during an unannounced check, 100 turtles. They were Annam leaf turtles (*Mauremys annamensis*, Appendix I), big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) and box turtles (*Cuora* spp., Appendix I or II). The driver, Huynh Thi Gai, aged 27, was arrested. She admits to buying them in Da Nang and planning to sell them in Hanoi for 120 million dong (5,300 US\$) to a buyer who had already paid her 5 million dong in advance (220 US\$).

Báo Hànoimoi, January 9, 2022; VnExpress International, January 9, 2022; ENV, January 19, 2022.³⁷



January 2, 2022

Hai Ha District, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam

A motorcycle cab driver since August, Tuan agreed one day to transport big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) in a Styrofoam box for 300,000 dong (13 US\$). At Hai Ha, on the 18A expressway, the police searched him and found the 13 turtles. At the trial, Tuan sincerely admitted his fault and said that it was the second or third time that he was going to deliver big-headed turtles to an agreed place without knowing the identity of the addressee, at the request of a man whose name he did not know and who owned a big car. Tuan was sentenced in the first instance to 10 years in prison.

Bao Giao Thong, January 2, 2022; ENV, January 4, 2022.³⁸

January 2022

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

The monks of a temple hand over to the authorities the turtles that were offered to them. This time, they are Mekong snail-eating turtles (*Malayemys subtrijuga*, Appendix II) and pond sliders (*Trachemys scripta*).

ENV, January 29, 2022.³⁹

February 2022

Dak Glei, Kon Tum Province, Viet Nam

Sentence of Tran Van Ngoc, aged 35, to 10 years in prison for having, in June 2021, bought and imported from Laos 63 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I).

An Ninh Thủ Đô, February 25, 2022.⁴⁰

Mid-February 2022

Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam

A yellow-headed tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II) held for 2 months was handed over. It weighs 500 grams.

ENV, February 17, 2022.⁴¹

February 23, 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

A Mekong snail-eating turtle (*Malayemys subtrijuga*, Appendix II) and a yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II) were voluntarily handed over. They were purchased from a roadside vendor who kept them captive perched on a brick and on a glass jar. They weighed 100 grams and 5 kg respectively. They were transferred to the Cu Chi shelter.

ENV, February 23, 2022.⁴²



End of February 2022

Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam

Seizure of one yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II) weighing 3 kg and one giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) weighing 500 grams from the hands of a street vendor.

ENV, February 28, 2022.⁴³

EUROPE

GERMANY

January 19, 2022

Donauwörth, Bavaria State, Germany



More bad taste! In a parcel coming from Switzerland and declared to contain "Home Deco," customs officers discovered the skeleton of a Greek tortoise (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) with its shell. It was accompanied by a copy of an invalid CITES document. The "decorative" object

was seized and the owner has one month to submit correct CITES documents.

WochenZeitung, January 26, 2022.⁴⁴

SPAIN

Mid-January 2022

Province of Granada, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain

Five Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) were seized from a 56-year-old man with an already extensive criminal record. The suspect also had 34 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) for sale. The possession and trade of these turtles from Florida, listed in the catalog of invasive alien species, are prohibited. The Guardia Civil deposited the Greek turtles at the Centre for the Recovery of Endangered Species (CREA) in Granada. Granada Hoy, January 15, 2022.⁴⁵

FRANCE

January 12, 2022

Bastia, Department of Upper Corsica, France



34 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) were found dead. This is the toll taken by Pierre-Marie Rossi, a cattle farmer who had cleared more than 23 hectares of his land in 2018. In view of their density at this location, the Dreal (Regional Directorate for the Environment, Development and Housing) estimates that between 116 and 349 turtles were killed by this clearing. "We are very close to an ecocide," denounced Me Martin Tomasi, counsel for the environmental association U Levante, a plaintiff in this case. "Inspectors from the French Biodiversity Agency immediately alerted the breeder when they saw the corpses. He still gyro-crushed about 20 additional hectares," said the lawyer. The Court of Appeals confirmed the 2-month suspended prison sentence, the obligation to repair all or part of the damage caused, the 35,000 € (39,670 US\$) fine, and the 10,000 € (11,330 US\$) in damages to the plaintiffs. Pierre-Marie Rossi has appealed to the Supreme Court.

Pierre-Marie Rossi is the son of Jean-Dominique Rossi, former director of the Chamber of Agriculture of South Corsica. He is also being prosecuted by his family for "organized fraud" and "aggravated money laundering" for alleged fraud in European agricultural aid estimated at 1.4 million € (1.5 million US\$).

Le Figaro (with AFP), January 14, 2022; U Levante, January 16, 2022.⁴⁶

February 3, 2022

Valence, Department of Drôme, France

The cat burglars had stolen turtles for resale. Rémy Dos Santos sentenced to a 4-month suspended prison term and a fine of 5,000 € (5,570 US\$), of which 3,000 € (3,340 US\$) is suspended. Samson Dos Santos to a 12-month prison term and a fine of 5,000 €, of which 2,000 € (2,230 US\$) is suspended. Nejoï Hadra to a fine of 2,000 € of which 1,000 € (1,115 US\$) is suspended. Rosa Rodrigues to the confiscation of 8,000 € (8,910 US\$) of the cash sum seized. The four will also have to pay 5,000 € in damages jointly and severally to the ASPAS.
ASPAS, Spring 2022.⁴⁷



FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 4, 2022

Tarbes, Department of Hautes-Pyrénées, France

Convicted of cruelty to a domestic animal, transport of litters of fox, badger and wild boar cubs, as well as capture and possession of European pond turtles (*Emys orbicularis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), Valentin and Pascal Aurignac were sentenced to the revocation of their hunting licence for 3 years, to 6 months' suspended imprisonment, to a fine of 1,200 € (1,340 US\$) each, as well as the publication of their conviction in 2 newspapers at their own expense. They were also ordered to pay the sum of 1,200€ in damages jointly and severally to the ASPAS.
ASPAS, Spring 2022.⁴⁸



ITALY

February 26, 2022

Favara, Province of Agrigento, Region of Sicily, Italy

The Carabinieri investigate an advertisement published on the Internet offering 3 tortoises for sale. From the trafficker, they seized 5 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II), including 3 juveniles.

La Sicilia, February 26, 2022.⁴⁹

March 18, 2022

San Pietro Clarenza, Metropolitan City of Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy

They wanted to give a hand and were hosting a relative. They saw the Carabinieri turn up. The man they were hosting, aged 29, had brought with him 10 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II). He was unable to provide documentation of their legal origin. One of them was already dead. They were seized.

CataniaToday, March 18, 2022.⁵⁰

RUSSIA

February 11, 2022

Yekaterinburg, Sverdlovsk Oblast, Russia

Seizure of a male northern Chinese softshell turtle (*Pelodiscus maackii*, Appendix II) in the hall of a temporary exhibition.

Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources, February 22, 2022.⁵¹



Northern Chinese softshell turtle (*Pelodiscus maackii*). Photo Jonghwan Choi

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

January 31, 2022

Rustenburg, North West Province, South Africa



The 2 owners of 3 Southern African pythons (*Python natalensis*, Appendix II) seized in August 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°26 p.26) were each sentenced to a fine of 50,000 rand (3,150 US\$) or 5 years in prison in case of non-payment. They must also reimburse the Johannesburg veterinary clinic and the NSPCA for the money spent on the maintenance and care of the pythons, which amounted to 85,000 rand (5,350 US\$). The snakes, which suffered from a number of health problems, were only able to return to the wild after several months of careful treatment.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, January 31, 2022.¹



NAMIBIA

February 28, 2022

Between Karibib, Erongo Region, and Okahandja, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

A python (*Python* spp., Appendix II) is found freshly killed in the toolbox of a white Scania truck. The driver Ayanda Gxoyiyana (41) said he picked it up on the road. The South African national appeared in court and was denied bail.

New Era, March 3, 2022.²

NIGER

March 10, 2022

Diffa Region, Niger. Border with Nigeria and Chad.

Scales under the leather: seizure of no less than 1,700 python (*Pythonidae*, Appendix II) skins hidden among cow skins. The trafficker - a Chadian national - was arrested.

Minister for the Environment and the Fight against Desertification, April 4 and 20, 2022; Born Free USA, April 13, 2022.³

ZIMBABWE

January 5 and 7, 2022

Chitungwiza and Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe



A self-proclaimed snake charmer was sentenced to 3 months in prison and 105 hours of community service. He was trying to sell a green mamba (*Dendroaspis angusticeps*) and a cobra (family *Elapidae*) for 100 US\$ each.

Fauna and Flora Zimbabwe, January 8, 2022; The Herald, January 10, 2022.⁴

AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 4, 2022

Santa Cruz do Rio Pardo, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 emerald tree boas (*Corallus caninus*, Appendix II) during the search of a bus on the João Baptista Cabral Rennó highway. The woman who was carrying them in her bag was released after being questioned by the police.

G1 Bauru e Marília, February 4, 2022.⁵

February 15, 2022

Nilópolis, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

An albino python (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II) was seized from a man. A baby sells for about 3,000 reais (555 US\$) while an adult can sell for up to 15,000 reais (2,777 US\$).

Extra, February 15, 2022.⁶

February 25, 2022

Sete Barras, State of São Paulo, Brazil

A Cropan's boa (*Corallus cropanii*, Appendix II) endemic to Vale do Ribeira, one of the rarest boa constrictors in the world, was found in a box at the home of an individual. He was fined 10,000 reais (2,106 US\$) and is being investigated.

G1 Santos, February 25, 2022.⁷



February 25, 2022

Palmas, State of Tocantins, Brazil

He had ordered frozen rats by mail to feed his caged Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). The parcel was seized, then the albino snake, and the 42-year-old man was fined 2,200 reais (410 US\$).

G1 Tocantins, February 25, 2022.⁸



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 19, 2022

Pomfret, State of Maryland, United States of America

David Riston (49) was found dead in his house filled with 124 illegally kept snakes, three quarters of them venomous. Pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), boas (*Boidae*, Appendix I or II), Mangshan pit vipers (*Trimeresurus mangshanensis*, Appendix II), puff adders (*Bitis arietans*), green mambas (*Dendroaspis angusticeps*), Gaboon vipers (*Bitis gabonica*), brown spotted pitvipers (*Protobothrops mucrosquamatus*), horned pit vipers (*Cerastes cerastes*), bush vipers (genus *Atheris*), saw-scaled vipers (genus *Echis*), western diamond-backed rattlesnakes (*Crotalus atrox*), Mojave rattlesnakes (*Crotalus scutulatus*), western massasaugas (*Sistrurus tergeminus*), banded rock rattlesnakes (*Crotalus lepidus*), Egyptian cobras (*Naja haje*), spitting cobras (family *Elapidae*), forest cobras (*Naja melanoleuca*) and rat snakes (family *Colubridae*) were evacuated.

Field & Stream, January 26, 2022.⁹

February 11, 2022

Grand Prairie, State of Texas, United States of America

His 1.8-meter-long West African banded cobra (*Naja savannula*) had escaped from his unsecured enclosure in August. The careless Lawrence Matl (23) was held in detention with bail set at 10,000 US\$. The snake was never found.

Cable News Network, August 5, 2021; The Dallas Morning News, February 11, 2022.¹⁰



Mid-February 2022

Broward County, State of Florida, United States of America

Nine Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 26 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) and one hybrid were seized. Two misdemeanour citations and two warnings were issued pending further proceedings.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, February 17, 2022.¹¹

ASIA

BANGLADESH

January 2, 2022

Kalukhali Upazila, Rajbari District, Dhaka Division, Bangladesh

Two Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) were rescued from an abandoned snake farm. Most of the residents had died. The owner, Rabiul Islam Ranju, was breeding several species to export venom.

Dhaka Tribune, January 3, 2022; The Business Standard, January 3, 2022.¹²



The Burmese pythons were over 4 metres long

March 16, 2022

Char Harirampur, Faridpur District, Dhaka Division, Bangladesh

A 1.52-meter-long Russell's viper (*Daboia russelii*, Appendix III in India) was killed with a harpoon and then burnt by farmers in Sheikh Mosharraf's (43) paddy field out of fear of its venom. Declared extinct in 2002, the Russell's viper has been seen again in the region, where 8-10 people died in 2018 and 2019 from its bite. A death rate that is decreasing due to the availability of anti-venoms at the Upazila Health Complex.

Dhaka Tribune, March 16, 2022.¹³



Another specimen was killed in the area on January 15, 2021

CHINA

January 2022

Beilun, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of an erhu, a musical instrument, made of Burmese python skins (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) destined for overseas.

Chinese Customs, January 28, 2022.¹⁴

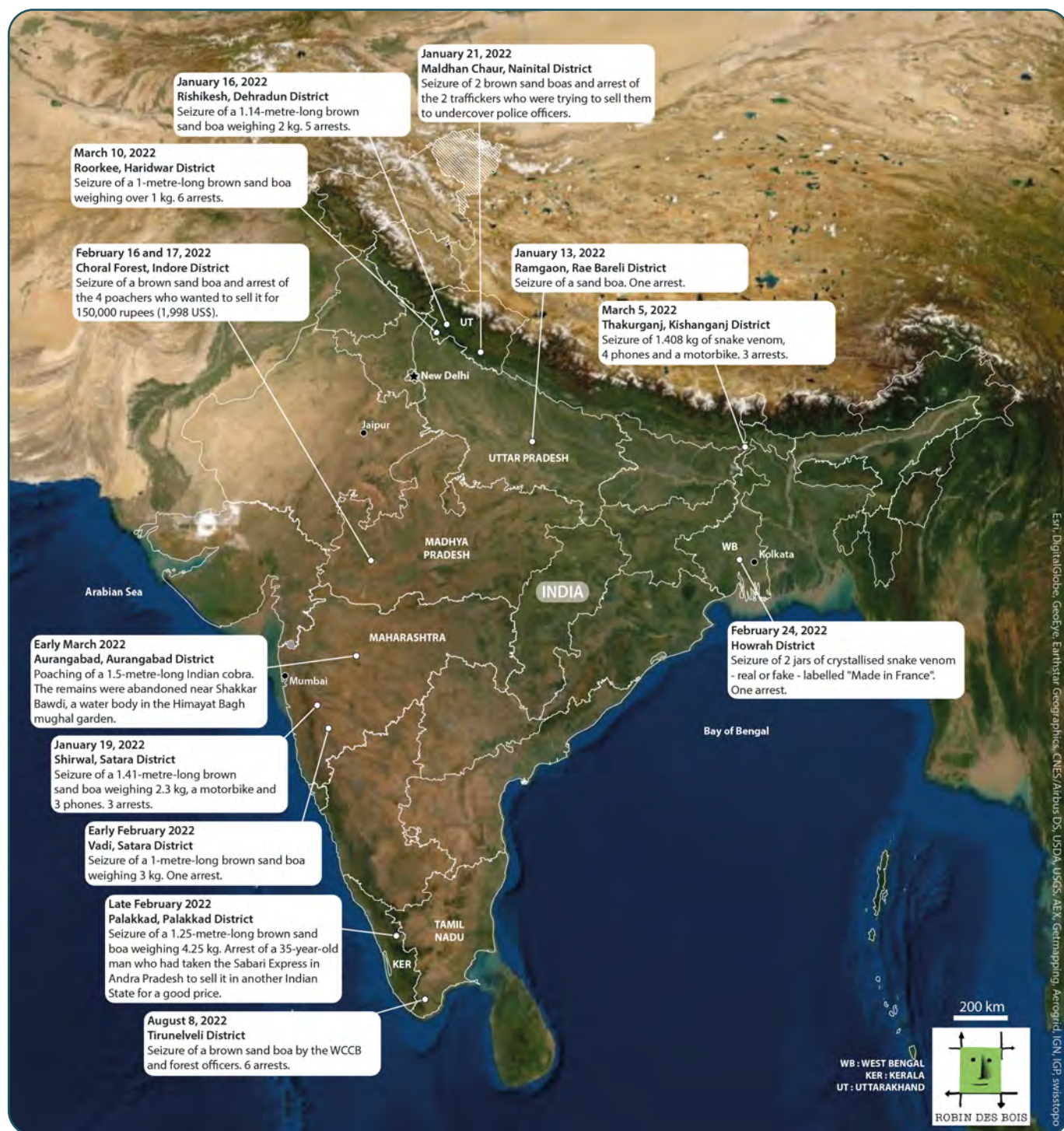
February 25, 2022

Chongqing Autonomous Municipality, China

Seizure of 20 erhus with a sounding board made of Burmese python skins (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II).

Chinese Customs, March 11, 2022.¹⁵

Poaching and trafficking of snakes or venom in India between January 1 and March 31, 2022, according to official and media sources



Sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II)
Brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)
Indian cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II)

Sources: Asianet News; Devdiscourse; ETV Bharat; Mathrubhumi; Press Trust of India; The Free Press Journal; The India Print; The Times of India; WCCB.



Seizure of 2 jars of crystallised snake venom - real or fake - stamped "Made in France". One arrest. February 24, 2022. Howrah District, State of West Bengal, India



Seizure of 1.408 kg of snake venom with an estimated value of several tens of millions of rupees, 4 phones and a motor-bike. Three arrests. March 5, 2022. Thakurganj, Kishanganj District, State of Bihar, India. Border with Nepal.

THAILAND

March 22, 2022

Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province, Thailand

When a bag starts to move by itself, hissing ferociously, it's not a good sign. There is panic in the warehouse of a transport company when a 4-meter-long king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) appears. Rescue workers finally succeeded in catching it. While waiting to identify the owner, they brought it to the nearby village of King Cobra (760 inhabitants). Since 1951, many of its inhabitants have owned king cobras. This tradition is attributed to a public figure, Ken Yongla. The snake shows attract tourists and supplement the income from farming and the sale of medicinal herbs.

Matichon, March 22, 2022.¹⁷

VIET NAM

January 25, 2022

Buon Ma Thuot, Dak Lak Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 2 king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II), one 2.5 meters long, the other 2.8 meters long, weighing a total of 4.5 kg, enclosed in a plastic bag in a parcel during the check of a minibus. The driver stated that it was handed to him by an unknown person in Krong Pak district. He had to deliver it to Buon Ma Thuot (40 km away). Sai Gon Giai Phong, January 27, 2022.¹⁸

EUROPE

GERMANY

March 14, 2022

Regensburg, Bavaria State, Germany



The 2 persons coming from Passau, 120 km away, "were not carrying anything forbidden." The customs officers open the trunk anyway and find a plastic box containing a dead python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II). In a confident manner, the motorists say to the agents that they use it to feed the 5 Indian cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) that they keep in a box on the back seat and hand out hand scribbled papers. They indicate that the snakes are to be sold in Germany. With such papers, the journey ends there for the cobras. German Customs, March 16, 2022.¹⁹

BELGIUM

January 27, 2022

Zelzate, Province of East Flanders, Flemish Region, Belgium

Police officers found the body of a 4-meter-long python in the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal in September. Suspecting that it came from a nearby house, they had placed the area under surveillance. On January 27, they showed up at the door of the house they thought was suspicious. The owner, a 31-year-old woman, opened the door. Their suspicions were quickly confirmed: they counted 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), 2 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), a royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), 2 Asiatic rock pythons (*Python molurus*, Appendix I or II), and a central bearded dragon (*Pogona vitticeps*). Their "owner" is a 32-year-old man, who hides in the attic with a large quantity of drugs and has no legal document for the possession of the reptiles. The woman is released after being questioned, the man remains in custody.

Local Police, February 1, 2022; The Brussels Times, February 2, 2022.²⁰

SPAIN

Mid-March 2022

Valencia, Province of Valencia, Autonomous Community of Valencia, Spain

Seizure of a royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) being sold on the Internet by a 47-year-old man. The man is charged with abuse and illegal possession.

Cadena SER (with EFE), March 16, 2022.²¹



FRANCE

January 7, 2022

Mézangers, Department of Mayenne, France

The corpse of a python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) 1.5 meters in length was found on a roadside. Considering its state of decomposition, the animal was probably already dead when it was dumped. The snake, subject to authorization and a certificate of capacity from the Prefecture, was not equipped with an identification chip, which has been mandatory since 2019.

Ouest-France, January 16, 2022; 20 Minutes, January 17, 2022.²²

January 14, 2022

Department of Manche, France

An Indian cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), a rainbow boa (*Epicrates cenchria*, Appendix II), a green mamba (*Dendroaspis angusticeps*), 2 Gaboon vipers (*Bitis gabonica*), and 3 pit vipers (subfamily Crotalinae) which are potentially lethal, were illegally kept in vivarium in a private home. Seized by the gendarmes assisted by agents of the French Biodiversity Agency, 3 firemen, a veterinarian and an emergency doctor, they were taken to a specialized care center in Brittany.

La Presse de la Manche, January 15, 2022.²³

March 2022

Department of La Manche, France

Seizure from a private individual of a rainbow boa (*Epicrates cenchria*, Appendix II), an Indian cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), a western diamond-backed rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*), 2 prairie rattlesnakes (*Crotalus viridis*), 2 rhino vipers (*Bitis nasicornis*), and a green mamba (*Dendroaspis viridis* or *Dendroaspis angusticeps*) held illegally in unsatisfactory conditions. All are venomous except the boa. The intervention was carried out with the support of the "Terrarium & Vivarium de Kerdanet" shelter. The man had bought the snakes at the Hamm fair in Germany and had spent 10 days in intensive care in 2020 after being bitten by one of his rattlesnakes.

Terrarium & Vivarium of Kerdanet, March 23, 2022.²⁴

ITALY

Early February 2022

Aosta, Autonomous Region of the Aosta Valley, Italy

The owner of a 1.8-meter-long boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) was reported to the authorities by family members. According to them, he was unable to care for it. The officers found that he did not have a CITES permit. The snake was temporarily entrusted to a wildlife care centre.

AostaSera.it, February 8, 2022.²⁵

THE NETHERLANDS

March 23, 2022

Schiedam, Province of South Holland, The Netherlands

Hikers spotted a 2.5-meter-long python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) in a meadow. After much effort, it was caught and taken to a reptile shelter in the hope that its owner would come and collect it. An animal rescuer involved in the operation is rather pessimistic: "It is unlikely that the snake escaped, the place where it was found was too far from houses. It is more likely that someone left it there on purpose. This is a good place to make a quick stop with the car."

Rijnmond, March 23, 2022.²⁶

IGUANAS, GECKOS ...



Eastern water dragon (*Intellagama lesueurii*). Photo Sdoung7405

AMERICA

BRAZIL

End of February 2022

Governador Valadares, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

He wanted to cage them rather than treat them. Two juvenile iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) sent by mail were seen on X-rays and seized. They were destined for a veterinarian who had bought them via the Internet for his family. He was arrested. G1 Vales de Minas Gerais, February 19, 2022.¹



COLOMBIA

January 12, 2022

Bogotá, Colombia

The parcels were moving. Two leopard geckos (*Eublepharis macularius*) that were being shipped by package to Cali were seized. The geckos were transferred to the San Emigdio Wildlife Care and Assessment Centre in Palmira.

Regional Autonomous Corporation of Valle del Cauca, January 12, 2022.²

Mid-February 2022

Calamar, Department of Bolívar, Colombia

The man was caught selling 250 iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) eggs on the street and was arrested. Their value is estimated at more than 750 million pesos (190,000 US\$).

El Universal, February 12, 2022.³

COSTA RICA

Early January 2022

Peñas Blancas, Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica

Arrest of 2 poachers with the corpse of a spiny-tailed iguana (*Ctenosaura* spp., Appendix II). Named Castillo and Reyes, they were also in possession of a .22 calibre rifle with 30 bullets, 2 machetes, and 5 hunting dogs, which were seized. Sport hunting has been banned in Costa Rica since 2012.

AM Prensa, January 10, 2022.⁴

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 25, 2022

Trenton, State of New Jersey, United States of America

Ten rhinoceros iguanas (*Cyclura cornuta*, Appendix I) were in the parcel labelled as "toys" bound for Hong Kong. The package was intercepted at John F. Kennedy Airport. For the second time, the sender using a false name had been paid 500 US\$ by the sponsors. Jason Ksepka (44) of Farmingdale (Monmouth County) was sentenced to 3 years' probation, including 6 months' home confinement, and a fine of 1,000 US\$. The iguanas were entrusted to a zoo in North Carolina. US Department of Justice, September 21, 2021 and January 25, 2022; Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, January-February 2022.⁵



February 2022

Miami, State of Florida, United States of America

Hidden among trinkets, 15 spiny-tailed lizards (*Uromastix* spp., Appendix II) had been caught in Broome, Western Australia, in March 2018 and sent to the USA for resale. Two men, aged 39 and 31, were sentenced to 3 years' supervised release, 300 days' home detention, a 40,000 US\$ fine and 3 years' supervised release, 6 months' house detention and 250 hours' community service respectively.

Media contact: Australian Border Force (02) 6264 2211

Australian Border Force, March 9, 2022.⁶



Gift wrapping and souvenirs hid the lizards

February 28, 2022

Miami, State of Florida, United States of America

They had caught in Australia, shipped in gift packages and sold in the USA 33 spiny-tailed skinks (genus *Egernia*) of different species between February and July 2018. Jose Francesco Munoz Di Rocco was sentenced to a 40,000 US\$ fine, 3 years' supervised release, 10 months' home confinement and 500 hours of community service. Francisco Manuel Rodriguez to 3 years' supervised release with 6 months' home detention and 250 hours of community service. Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, March 2022.⁷



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

End of March 2022

Couva, Couva-Tabaquite-Talparo Region, Trinidad and Tobago

At the Couva Sports bar, you could order curry made from the meat and eggs of green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) until forestry officers came to play spoilsport. Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, April 14, 2022.⁸



ASIA

INDIA

Night of January 21 to 22, 2022

Odlabari, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India



A tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) was removed from trafficking. Thutan Jamba, Narbahadur Lama and Naduram Pagag were negotiating the price of the animal. They hoped to obtain between 1 and 1.5 million rupees (13,451 to 20,177 US\$). Two traffickers managed to escape. The gecko had been captured in the forests of Meghalaya.

The Telegraph India, January 23, 2022.⁹

February 12, 2022

Kestopur, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India

Federal agents of the WCCB, forest guards of the Bagdogra range and paramilitaries of the 8th Battalion of the SSB swooped on an individual in possession of 2 tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II).

WCCB, February 13, 2022.¹⁰

PHILIPPINES

January 27, 2022

Clark-Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, Pampanga Province, Philippines

The shipment declared as "Tupperware" from Malaysia was hiding 4 bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*). Revealed by X-ray inspection, the 2 female and 2 male live bearded dragons were indeed enclosed in plastic containers, without the required health or veterinary certificate. They were turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for care and rehabilitation.

Bureau of Customs, January 30, 2022.¹¹



Early March 2022

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines

Seizure of 8 geckos in a parcel from Bangkok declared to contain "commercial samples."

Bureau of Customs, March 18, 2022.¹²

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

January 26, 2022

Warriewood, State of New South Wales, Australia

Eastern water dragons (*Intellagama lesueurii*, Appendix III as of June 22, 2022) were targeted by dart fire. Police issued an appeal for witnesses after the 4 injured lizards were found in the Shearwater Drive wetlands. A wildlife officer captured them to remove the darts. Only one animal was treated at a local veterinarian and they were all returned to their habitat.

NSW Police Force, January 27, 2022.¹³

End of March 2022

Eudlo, State of Queensland, Australia



Hit by a car, riddled with 6 pellets and suffering from facial trauma, a lace monitor (*Varanus varius*, Appendix II) named "Cruiser" has been admitted to Australia Zoo Wildlife and, against all odds, is recovering well.

Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors, April 2, 2022.¹⁴

CROCODILES, ALLIGATORS AND CAIMANS

AFRICA

CAMEROON

February 12, 2022

Mbalmayo, Centre Region, Cameroon

Twelve African dwarf crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I) were seized from a bus coming from Djà-et-Lobo. Three of them were already dead. The traffickers vanished into thin air. The survivors were taken to the zoo botanical garden of Mvog-Betsi in Yaoundé.

Journal du Cameroun, February 15, 2022; Le Bled Parle, February 15, 2022.¹

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Early January 2022

Levy County, State of Florida, United States of America

Mediocrity does not await the passing of years. Among the poachers who were killing American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) in a private property, a minor was hunting alone, unsupervised. His father, who set a bad example, will have to suffer the legal consequences.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, January 13, 2022.²

January 21, 2022

Kilgore, State of Texas, United States of America



In addition to firearms, money, and various drugs (marijuana, psilocybin...), investigators from the Rusk County Sheriff's Office in collaboration with the Texas Game Wardens found a suspected caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II) of approximately 90 cm in length during a search of the home of 44-year-old Jason Best. He was transferred to Nature's Edge, a wildlife shelter in Dallas. The investigation was conducted as a result of a tip on Crime Stoppers. Best is facing 4 charges. His bail was set by the judge at 118,500 US\$.

Rusk County Sheriff's Office, January 24, 2022.³

February 8, 2022

Shasta County, State of California, United States of America

Drink driving with an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) in the car. The driver had been "helping out" a friend who had been arrested. Tyler Watson, 29, from Redding, was in turn taken into custody. The juvenile reptile was taken in by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Newsweek, February 9, 2022.⁴



The young alligator taken for a ride

February 23, 2022

LaBelle, State of Florida, United States of America

He was trespassing on private property with 2 dead American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) in his truck. Ronaldo De Souza (41) had shot them with a rifle. He was taken into custody.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 3, 2022; NBC2, March 3, 2022.⁵

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 23, 2022

Assumption Parish, State of Louisiana, United States of America

The poachers were plastered. Beer, whiskey, a .22 calibre pistol and rifle were found in their boat, and an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) shot in their truck. Mickey P. Sanchez (55), Joey Bergeron Jr (21) and Joey Bergeron (45) were arrested and the latter taken into custody.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, February 28, 2022.⁶

End of February 2022

Columbia County, State of Florida, United States of America

Logbook violations, no confirmation number violations and untagged American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) in the taxidermy shop: 2 misdemeanour charges and several warnings were issued to the stuffers.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 3, 2022.⁷

End of February 2022

Hoopeston, State of Illinois, United States of America

Discovery of several American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) carcasses in a dumpster. One man was indicted.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, February 28 and March 15, 2022.⁸

Early March 2022

Saint-Johns County, State of Florida, United States of America

The man had filed false reports to clear the poaching of an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II). He received 2 citations.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 17, 2022.⁹

March 19, 2022

Paterson, State of New Jersey, United States of America

An American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) for sale. The ad triggered the arrest of the hustler.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, March 20, 2022.¹⁰

March 22, 2022

Amherst and Dunkirk, State of New York, United States of America

The bulky one-metre-long American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) proved to be a poor pet. After trying to sell it, the man who bought it claimed in vain that he had rescued it in order to get rid of it. Both the liar and the first seller were charged with unlawful possession and the investigation is ongoing.

Department of Environmental Conservation, April 15, 2022.¹¹



The man realised a little too late that the alligator was recalcitrant about domestication

End of March 2022

Cook County, State of Illinois, United States of America

The local environmental officer visits a woman who is offering a Cuvier's smooth-fronted caiman (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*, Appendix II) for adoption. She tells him that the caiman is not in her home and that she put the ad out as a favour to a friend. Unfortunately, she has a memory lapse and is unable to remember her friend's name. The agent leaves his card for her to contact him again, goes away, and a few minutes later... is called by the suspect's husband. The caiman is in fact at their home. The undocumented animal is confiscated.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, March 31, 2022.¹²

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 16, 2022

Bonito, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Rifles, .45-calibre ammunition and caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II) meat are seized. The arrested poachers had shot 2 reptiles in Miranda River. Aged 31 and 36, they have been fined 2,500 reais (526 US\$) each.

Midiamax, February 16, 2022.¹³



ASIA

CHINA

March 17, 2022

Wuhan Tianhe International Airport, Hubei Province, China

Seizure of 5 belts made of crocodile skin (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) in the luggage of a passenger from abroad. Total weight, 1.65 kg. Chinese Customs, March 21, 2022.¹⁴

INDIA

Night of March 18 to 19, 2022

Rajupet, Warangal District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

The village of Rajupet has a distinctive characteristic: on one side of the road one is in Telangana, on the other in Andhra Pradesh. A mugger crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*, Appendix I) ventured into the village at night from a pipe connected to the Godavari River. It was spotted by a youth and stoned to death by local residents. When informed, the forest officer of Bhadrachalam (Telangana) said that he was not competent to deal with the case as the area was not on his side of the road. His counterparts in Andhra Pradesh should be contacted.

Telangana Today, March 20, 2022.¹⁵

End of March 2022

Caranzol, North Goa District, State of Goa, India

Intensive sand extraction from rivers is driving the saurians dangerously close to inland forests. A mugger crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*, Appendix I) was "preventively" killed by villagers for fear that it was a man-eater.

The Times of India, March 30, 2022.¹⁶

INDONESIA

February 7, 2022

Palu, Central Sulawesi Province, Sulawesi Island, Indonesia

It had a motorbike tyre stuck around its neck for about 5 years. A 5.2-metre-long crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) was freed from its rubber noose by local people. It was reunited with its river.

New Straits Times (with AFP), February 8, 2022.¹⁷



A citizen's mobilisation enables to free the reptile

JORDAN

Early February 2022

Jordan

Smuggled into Jordan and offered for sale as a pet on social networks, a Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix I or II), named "Mahzooz" ("lucky" in Arabic), has escaped captivity by "influencers" who pose online with wild animals or euthanasia by authorities who often do not have the means to organise a reintroduction. It was released at the crocodile lake in the Al-Dinder Biosphere Reserve in Sudan.

Al Bawaba, February 3, 2022.¹⁸

EUROPE

SPAIN

Mid-February 2022

A Coruña, Province of A Coruña, Autonomous Community of Galicia, Spain

A stuffed spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II) is for sale online. The advertiser is quickly located and charged with selling without a CITES permit. The caiman has been handed over to the customs office of A Coruña.

Cadena SER, February 18, 2022.¹⁹

POLAND

January 27, 2022

Pruszków, Mazovian Voivodeship, Poland



The 2 parcels from the United States, each supposed to contain 15 kg of second-hand clothes, did not inspire confidence among the customs officers. They were addressed to different recipients, but with the same address. In reality, they each contained 21 crocodilian skins (*Crocodylia*, Appendix I or II) and 4 wallets made of imitation reptile skin.

National Revenue Administration, January 27, 2022.²⁰

RUSSIA

February 15, 2022

Samara International Airport, Samara Oblast, Russia

The Nile crocodile skin (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II) that a Russian national disembarking from a flight from Hurgada (Egypt) brought back as a souvenir was confiscated. According to the customs official, this is an uncommon seizure: usually, stuffed crocodiles are brought back by tourists.

Virtual Customs, February 15, 2022.²¹

ASIA

CHINA

March 2022

Lintao County, Dingxi Prefecture, Gansu Province, China

Seizure of 2,000 live Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*) during 4 operations. They were released in different watering places in the area so as not to affect the local ecosystem.

Lintao County Public Security, April 4, 2022.¹

PHILIPPINES

February 10, 2022

Valenzuela, National Capital Region, Philippines

They were offering various wild animals on Facebook groups and sending them by mail. The interception of a parcel delivered by motorbike from Manila containing 2 Chinese giant salamanders (*Andrias davidianus*, Appendix I) put an end to the trafficking of Christian Jade Ponce Nualla (36) and John Marvic Ramirez.

Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group, February 17, 2022.²

facebook

EUROPE

FRANCE

March 16, 2022

Besançon, Department of Doubs, France

Like every year, the frog-hunting season is in full swing in Franche-Comté. The prefectoral authorisation lasts for a month and tens of thousands of common frogs (*Rana temporaria*) are snatched from the Doubs River to end up on the plates of so-called "gourmets". As for him, the president of the Interprofessional Union of the Common Frog had poached 50,000 eggs in a pond that did not belong to him. Although he was fined 1,875 € (2,100 US\$) at first instance, he was partially acquitted on appeal and will only have to pay 307 € (345 US\$).

Frogs' legs, cf. "EU responsible for extinction domino effect on frog populations" <https://robindesbois.org/en/lunion-europeenne-responsable-de-lextinction-en-cascade-des-populations-de-grenouilles/>

L'Est Républicain, March 16, 2022.³



SWITZERLAND

End of January 2022

Switzerland

About 100 amphibians were seized from traffickers by agents of the Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS), thanks to a tip from a private individual. Among them, 69 protected poison frogs (*Dendrobates* spp., *Oophaga* spp., and *Ranitomeya* spp., Appendix II) with an estimated value of nearly 5,700 Swiss francs (6,230 US\$). The amphibians, caught illegally by children in Panama, were sold to international smugglers, then at reptile fairs before being smuggled into Switzerland to be resold on various Internet platforms. This is an international trade whose actors are known to the Belgian, Slovakian, Polish, Dutch, Czech, French, and German authorities and for which the Swiss defendants risk up to 5 years in prison.

Federal Office for Customs and Border Security, January 28, 2022.⁴



© OFDF



Cithaerias paretia. Photo Niels Poul Dreyer

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

March 2022

El Dorado International Airport, Bogotá, Colombia

Recovery at the very last moment of 143 tarantulas (suborder Mygalomorphae) that were to be sent to Mexico City. The spiders hidden inside a chess set were shown by scanners at the cargo terminal. Placed in plastic bags, 12 of them were already dead. They were transferred to the Centre for the Care, Enhancement and Rehabilitation of Wildlife. Secretary of the Environment of Bogotá, March 31, 2022.¹

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

February 19-25, 2022

Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania, United States of America

Nine plastic jars from Bulgaria to Connecticut, Florida and Illinois were seized in the air cargo. A great catch: inside, about 300 northern medicinal leeches (*Hirudo medicinalis*, Appendix II) labelled *Hirudo orientalis* and used in bloodletting "treatments".

US Customs and Border Protection, March 9, 2022.²

ASIA

CHINA

January 2022

Shenhe District, Shenyang Prefecture, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of 35 butterflies, including *Morpho menelaus*, *Morpho adonis*, *Parnassius hardwickii* and species of the genera *Cithaerias*, *Papilio* and *Neozephyrus* in an incoming parcel.

Morpho menelaus, *Morpho adonis*, and butterflies of the genus *Cithaerias* live in Latin America, from Costa Rica to Brazil. *Parnassius hardwickii* are endemic to the Himalayas, from northern Pakistan to south-western China.

Neozephyrus are found from Eastern Russia through China to Japan. Species of the genus *Papilio* are distributed throughout the world except for Antarctica.

Chinese Customs, February 7, 2022.³



© China Customs

January 2022

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 56 unidentified butterflies in an inbound parcel declared to contain "stamps."
Chinese Customs, February 7, 2022.⁴



February 2022

Zhengzhou, Zhengzhou Prefecture, Henan Province, China

Seizure of 5,050 dead butterflies of 9 different species, each placed in tracing paper bags, in parcels from abroad.
Chinese Customs, March 4, 2022.⁸



February 2022

Ningbo-Zhoushan Port, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure at the Meishan terminal in the luggage of sailors of 7 preserved butterflies in their frame stamped "souvenir of Madagascar" and of a common spider shell (*Lambis lambis*).
Chinese Customs, March 10, 2022.⁹



Early February 2022
Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China

Seizure of 6 live beetles in an incoming parcel declared to contain "essential products."
Chinese Customs, February 15, 2022.⁵



Early February 2022
Fuzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China

Seizure in an incoming parcel declared to contain "cookies" of 14 beetles including 10 larvae, each packed in plastic boxes hidden in cookie boxes. Total weight, 460 grams.
Chinese Customs, February 16, 2022.⁶

February 2022
Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Seizure of 39 preserved beetles including *Chalcosoma chiron*, *Odontolabis cuvera*, *Eupatorus gracilicornis* and *Prosopocoilus confucius* in a postal package.
Chinese Customs, February 24, 2022.⁷

March 2022

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 10 preserved butterflies in a mail from abroad. They were accompanied by annotations such as the date of collection and the location, which was Tanzania.
Chinese Customs, March 19, 2022.¹⁰

March 2022

Chongqing Autonomous Municipality, China

Seizure of a live 18 cm long Hercules beetle (*Dynastes hercules*) in a parcel from abroad.
China Customs, March 26, 2022.¹¹

March 2022

Xiangzhou District, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 16 *Chalcosoma chiron*s from Southeast Asia trapped in plastic bottles within a parcel from abroad.
Chinese Customs, April 11, 2022.¹²

PHILIPPINES

Early March 2022

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines

The Dubai-bound parcel from Pasay City contained 45 spiders, including five tarantulas. They were handed over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Bureau of Customs, March 18, 2022.¹³

EUROPE

BELGIUM

March 26, 2022

Jette, Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium

Called to a neighbourhood dispute, the police found 221 tarantulas shut in about 70 small plastic boxes on the second floor of a flat. One of them was dead, the others were running out of water. All were venomous, but only 26 specimens were truly dangerous, from 7 species known to be aggressive. The spiders, valued at 10,000 € (11,215 US\$), were transferred to a specialised German centre. The tenant was issued a ticket.

Le Soir, April 9, 2022 ; Sudinfo, April 9, 2022.¹⁴

FRANCE

FAMILY AFFAIRS / REPEATED OFFENSE

March 2, 2022

Grenoble, Department of Isère, France

A 71-year-old pensioner and his 40-year-old son had one of the largest collections of butterflies in France, more than 40,000 specimens, including 1,360 from protected species. They devoted all their holidays to hunting down lepidopterans, scrupulously noting the GPS coordinates of places of capture located all over the world. The son, who had received a warning for similar offenses, was fined 5,000 € (5,600 US\$), of which 3,000 € (3,360 US\$) was suspended, and the father 20,000 € (22,430 US\$), of which 10,000 € (11,215 US\$) was suspended. The collection will be handed over to the Museum of Natural History of Grenoble.

20 Minutes, March 4, 2022; Le Progrès, March 5, 2022.¹⁵



UNITED KINGDOM

January 7, 2022

London, England, United Kingdom

A surprise for passengers on a train arriving at London Bridge station: a pink-toed tarantula (*Avicularia avicularia*) measuring 3.5 cm, had been left in a clear plastic container. The arachnid was taken to specialists at the South Essex Wildlife Hospital.

These tree tarantulas are native to the rainforests of South America and the southern Caribbean islands. Their name comes from the peach-colored tips of their legs, which help them melt into their habitat. Non-venomous, their bite is often compared to a wasp sting. They make popular pets among tarantula lovers. Females can live 10 to 12 years in captivity, and they require special care. Impulse buying and a lack of research into their needs mean that many are mistreated or abandoned.

Echo, January 14, 2022.¹⁶



Pink-toed tarantula (*Avicularia avicularia*)

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, elephants, rhinos and felines, see page 13; elephants, rhinos, hippos, walruses and sperm whales (ivories), see page 35.



"Tigre et rhinocéros" (Tiger and rhinoceros)
Henri Deluermoz (1876-1943).

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

March 15-17, 2022

Sangmélima, South Region, Cameroon

Arrest in 3 days of 6 members of the same network. Seizure of 5 tusks including baby elephant tusks, a dead pangolin, limbs and smoked meat of a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I).

EAGLE, March 20, 2022; LAGA, March 2022; Camer.be, April 25, 2022.¹



GABON

March 18, 2022

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Jean de Dieu Guiemeni was sentenced to one year in prison, fined 100,000 CFA francs (170 US\$) and ordered to pay one million CFA francs (1,700 US\$) in damages. This traditional healer was arrested on August 13, 2021, in possession of 2 elephant tusks weighing 0.4 kg, an elephant tail, 2 kg of pangolin scales, a leopard skin and 12 leopard teeth (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a python head (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II), and a monkey skull (see "On the Trail" n°33, p. 218).

Conservation Justice, March 2022.²



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 9, 2022

Bamingui-Bangoran National Park, Prefecture of Bamingui-Bangoran, Central African Republic

Apollinaire Kouranodjo, his 22-year-old son Gervais Degotto and his cousin Rock Kossi-Banda were arrested in the UNESCO World Heritage Park. They were armed with a shotgun, nets and wire to set traps. "We are farmers but the multiple crises and insecurity in our regions have meant that we have lost our agricultural reserves and we are unable to cultivate. That is why we decided to hunt and fish to feed our families because we are all fathers of the household." "We record several cases of poachers caught singing the same refrain. But once they are released, they will start again, they are repeat offenders," says Cyriaque Maximin Guimet, commissioner at the Ndelé police station. The Bamingui-Bangoran Park is home to elephants, hippos, lions, leopards, giraffes and primates. Journal de Bangui, February 15, 2022.³

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 2, 2022

Butembo, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Arrest of 2 traffickers in possession of 38 kg of raw ivory and 2 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I). They were about to travel to Uganda to sell their "goods." The animals were poached in Virunga Park. 80% of the wildlife products sold in Uganda are believed to come from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Adams Cassinga, February 2, 2022; Environews DRC, February 2, 2022.⁴



© Adams Cassinga

EASTERN AFRICA

MOZAMBIQUE

January 17, 2022

Maputo, Maputo Province, Mozambique

Leonardo Bernadete Carlos was sentenced to 9 years and 2 months in prison. He had been arrested in July 2021 while setting traps in the Maputo Reserve with a 14-year-old boy.

Carta de Moçambique, January 19, 2022.⁵



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

March 25, 2022

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Humane Society International/Africa is contesting the 2022 hunting and trophy export quota that was published on February 25. In particular, HSI/Africa bases its claim on the fact that the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has not consulted the public in accordance with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004. In its February 25 communication, the DFFE says that "regulated and sustainable hunting is an important conservation tool in South Africa." Ten leopards, 150 elephants, and 10 black rhinos are on the list of those condemned to die under fire by hunters from the United States of America and the European Union (70%), Russia (4%), Canada (3%) and Mexico (2%) to contribute to the welfare of their fellow animals.

In April, the Cape Town High Court suspended the allocation of quotas for the 3 species mentioned above until the merits of HSI's complaint are examined.

Humane Society International / Africa, March 25 and April 25, 2022.⁶

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mid-January 2022

Escambia County, State of Florida, United States of America

Seizure of a bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II), an alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*, Appendix III in the United States of America), a mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), 48 migratory ducks, all stuffed, and the meat of an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) from an illegal taxidermist.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, January 20, 2022.⁷



OPERATION GLOBAL REACH
January 27, 2022
Amarillo, State of Texas, United States of America

Richard Kazmaier, professor of biology at the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, has been charged with fraudulently importing skulls, skeletons and trophies of 14 protected species between March 2017 and February 2020.

He is accused of having fraudulently imported skulls, skeletons and trophies of 14 protected species between March 2017 and February 2020. Common otters (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I), lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II), caracals (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I or II), vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II), king birds-of-paradise (*Cicinnurus regius*, Appendix II) and greater naked-tailed armadillos (*Cabassous tatouay*, Appendix III in Uruguay) are cited in the investigation file. The main export country is reportedly Indonesia.

US Department of Justice, January 27, 2022; KJTV, February 11, 2022.⁸



January 27, 2022
Salem, State of Virginia, United States of America

Seizure in a private home of an American black bear cub (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) and several weapons. Two arrests.

West Virginia Natural Resources Police, February 3, 2022.⁹



March 3, 2022
Liberty, State of New York, United States of America

Officers posing as customers entered the antique store. When they found ivory and leather goods made of alligator (*Alligator* spp., Appendix I or II) and leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) skins, they identified themselves, seized the items and fined the owner 2,500 US\$.

Department of Environmental Conservation, March 30, 2022.¹⁰



March 14, 2022
Marion, State of New York, United States of America

Seizure at Mini Ark Farms of a bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II), wolf hybrids (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), 2 alligators (*Alligator* spp., Appendix I or II), snakes, and transfer to the Lollypop refuge of several hundred rodents that Sally Reaves, the director, was trading in. Reaves admits that she has not renewed her license and that efforts to do so with the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) have failed, but she says she still holds a WOWEE (World of Wildlife Educational Encounters) permit, which allows her to organize educational events with animals. The Lollypop refuge, which has received hundreds of rats, mice and other small rodents, is overwhelmed and is calling for donations of timothy, guinea pig pellets, fruit, empty tissue boxes and toilet paper tubes for the residents to play with.

News10NBC, March 16, 2022; Times of Wayne County, March 20, 2022.¹¹



March 23, 2022
Franklin, State of Texas, United States of America

Jason Clay is ramping up violations of the Animal Welfare Act and the Endangered Species Act at the 2 roadside zoos he operates, Franklin Drive Thru Safari and East Texas Zoo and Gator Park. Between 2014 and 2020, USDA

(US Department of Agriculture) inspection reports are a litany of abuse, neglect, drugged animal displays and deaths from lack of veterinary care. He sold "exotic" animals at auction to hunting pens and other roadside zoos. He bought or sold animals without the transactions appearing on the records of his 2 establishments, including a ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I), 7 vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II), 2 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II), 4 Sulawesi macaques (*Macaca nigra*, Appendix II), 2 Baird's tapirs (*Tapirus bairdii*, Appendix I), 3 small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I), 5 Cyprus mouflons (*Ovis gmelini*, Appendix I in Cyprus), 2 fishing cats (*Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II), 2 kinkajous (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 5 jackals (genus *Canis*).

The Animal Legal Defense Fund files a lawsuit demanding that the USDA immediately revoke Clay's animal permits.

Animal Legal Defense Fund, January 25, 2022; United States Department of Agriculture, March 23, 2022; Roadside Zoo News, May 2, 2022.¹²



LATIN AMERICA

BELIZE

February 23, 2022

Springfield and Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize

Seizure at Ruben Beiler's home of live animals kept in cages along with skins, teeth, feathers, legs and other animal parts. Victims include jaguars (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), crocodiles (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), white-nosed coatis (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III in Honduras) and Indian peafowls (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Beiler was fined 2,000 Belizean dollars (1,000 US\$). Great Belize Television, February 25, 2022.¹³



BRAZIL

February 8, 2022

Aquiraz, State of Ceará, Brazil

A 40-year-old man was allegedly keeping wild animals in precarious conditions. The police went to the place and discovered an oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), a capuchin monkey (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp, Appendix II), a red-and-green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II), 2 caatinga parakeets (*Aratinga cactorum*, Appendix II), 7 white-faced whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna viduata*), 5 tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), 6 Brazilian guinea pigs (*Cavia aperea*), 15 grey mice, 6 quails, and 26 rabbits. Secretariat of Public Safety and Social Defense of Ceara, February 9, 2022.¹⁴



FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 10, 2022

Eldorado, State of São Paulo, Brazil

The couple was under investigation for poaching. At the time of the search, only the woman, aged 62, was present. In their freezers, police found the decapitated bodies of 2 white-lipped peccaries (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II), 2 coatis (genus *Nasua*), and 3 armadillos (family Dasypodidae). They also seized a black-throated grosbeak (*Saltator fuliginosus*) in a cage. The man, aged 52, was not found.

G1 Santos, February 11, 2022.¹⁵

OPERATION HORUS

February 13, 2022

State of Amapa, Brazil. Border with French Guiana.

Boarding on the Oiapoque River. On board the boat, seizure of a live capuchin monkey (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp., Appendix II) and dead animals, including tapirs (*Tapirus* spp., Appendix I or II), monkeys (order Primates, Appendix I or II), pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), curassows (family Cracidae), wild ducks, a rifle, and ammunition. Two arrests. They were going to sell their "merchandise" in French Guiana.

Amapá State Civil Police, February 14, 2022.¹⁶

February 14, 2022

Pequi, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

The police receive a tip: "an exotic snake will be delivered to a private home in Pequi." The parcel is intercepted and a 31-year-old man is arrested. He admits to having other animals at home for sale. Seizure of 2 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), 2 tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), and a green-winged saltator (*Saltator similis*) dead in its cage.

G1 Centro-Oeste de Minas, February 15, 2022.¹⁷



March 10, 2022

Fortaleza, State of Ceará, Brazil

Seizure in an abandoned house of 4 fighting dogs, 10 birds, and several ornamental fish. According to the residents, they had been abandoned for at least 5 days. They were entrusted to the APA (Anjos de Proteção Animal).

G1 CE, March 11, 2022.¹⁸

March 10, 2022

Marília, São Paulo State, Brazil

Seizure of a yellow-chevrons parakeet (*Brotopogon chiriri*, Appendix II) and 2 unbanded blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) from a man suspected of illegal breeding. The police also seized a red-footed tortoise (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II). Fine of 2,000 reais.

Marília Notícia, March 15, 2022.¹⁹



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Mid-March 2022

Nova Santa Rita, State of Grande do Sul, Brazil

Search of a father and his son denounced by an association. They would sell animals via WhatsApp. Seizure of 35 cages, 2 cage traps, a homemade rifle, 2 rifles, hundreds of cartridges, 8 grams of marijuana, an armadillo shell and tail (family Dasypodidae), a turtle shell, and 22 birds, including campo troupials (*Icterus jamacaii*), which they were selling for 3,500 reais each (685 US\$).

Agência GBC, March 12, 2022.²⁰



March 28, 2022

Porto Alegre, State of Río Grande do Sul, Brazil

Seizure in an apartment of 2 capuchin monkeys (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp., Appendix II) and 2 black-bellied sliders (*Trachemys dorbigni*). The 2 occupants did not have documents proving the legal origin of the capuchins, and the turtles are prohibited from being traded in the country.

G1 RS, March 28, 2022.²¹

ECUADOR

Early March 2022

El Coca, Province of Orellana, Ecuador

Sentence of a vendor in the El Coca market to 3 years in prison and a fine of 2,700 US\$ for having hidden in his freezer 84 South American river turtle eggs (*Pododemis expansa*, Appendix II), 2.3 kg of paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 2.7 kg of red brocket meat (*Mazama americana*).

El Universo, March 11, 2022.²²



FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

January 2022

Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France

Seizure in a pirogue on the Kourou River of a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), 4 black curassows (*Crax alector*) and a decapitated anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*), a water bird. The 4 remains were in a cooler. Three arrests.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.²³

January 15, 2022

Saint-Georges, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France. Border with Brazil.

Seizure in a pirogue of 28 kg of Schneider's smooth-fronted caiman meat (*Paleosuchus trigonatus*, Appendix II), 12 kg of capuchin monkey meat (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II), 5 kg of paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), 20 kg of black curassow meat (*Crax alector*), and 9 kg of grey brocket meat (*Mazama gouazoubira*).

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.²⁴

MEXICO

Early January 2022

Xulhá, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico

Seizure of 164 abused animals at a ranch, including a crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), 2 spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 cockatoos (*Cacatua* spp., Appendix I or II), macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), Indian peafowls (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and axolotls (*Ambystoma mexicanum*, Appendix II). An animal mass grave was discovered on the ranch premises. Three arrests.

Pedro Canche Noticias, January 6, 2022.²⁵

PANAMA

Mid-February 2022

Chame District, Panamá Oeste Province, Panama

Seizure of a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) chained by a rope around the neck and 2 white-nosed coatis (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III in Honduras) in a cage. Anesthetized to limit their stress, they were exfiltrated in the Altos de Campana National Park.

Día a Día, February 18, 2022.²⁶

PERU

Mid-March 2022

Huancayo, Province of Huancayo, Department of Junín, Peru

Seizure of 13 white-winged parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolurus*, Appendix II), 3 red-masked conures (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II), a yellow-footed tortoise (*Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), and an iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) at a market. They were packed in raffia bags and cardboard boxes.

La República, March 16, 2022.²⁷

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

January 22, 2022

Fangchenggang, Fangchenggang Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.



"Chen" was arrested during a roadside check. In his car, there were 213 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) and a piece of rhinoceros horn weighing 72.08 grams which he had bought "abroad."

China Youth, March 30, 2022.²⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE / FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 2022

Ya'an, Ya'an Préfecture, Sichuan Province, China

Li Mouhua (not his real name) was at the centre of the trade. 18 golden snub-nosed monkeys (*Rhinopithecus roxellana*, Appendix I) and 17 red pandas (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) were seized. He bought the monkeys from poachers for 13,000 yuan (2,040 US\$) and sold them for 75,000 yuan (11,790 US\$) to zoos that issued certificates of origin and sold them to other zoos for 500,000 yuan (78,600 US\$). The same system applies to the pandas. Fifteen people including Li and his son, poachers in Sichuan and zoo employees in Anhui, Jiangsu and Shandong provinces. In the gang's coded language, golden snub-nosed monkeys were referred to as "mountain chickens" and red pandas as "kittens". =>

Li Mouhua was previously sentenced to 13 years and 6 months in prison for trafficking in macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) in 2006. He was released on bail in 2013 and implicated in trafficking in red pandas in 2017.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, February 23, 2022; China.com.cn, February 28, 2022.²⁹



February 2022

Nansha District, Guangzhou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Marine police checked a suspicious pleasure craft and seized 22 boxes inside containing bird's nests, swim bladders, lobsters, and Angong Niu Huang pills which contain extracts of preputial glands of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II). Three arrests.

Chinese Customs, March 1, 2022.³⁰

February 2022

Zhenjiang Port, Zhenjiang Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizure in the hand luggage of a sailor of a wallet made of Chinese alligator skin (*Alligator sinensis*, Appendix I) and 2 horned helmets (*Cassis cornuta*) weighing 213.88 and 3,205 grams.

Chinese Customs, February 27, 2022.³¹

MONGOLIA

OPERATION ECO-2022

February 21 to March 21, 2022

Mongolia

92 suspected poachers and traffickers were arrested. The overall value of the seizures is 386,923,725 tögrögs (135,210 US\$). These are dinosaur bones, a snow leopard skin (see page 58), a lynx skin (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II), a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), 15 Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II), 27 muskrat skins (*Ondatra zibethicus*), 2 Mongolian gazelles (*Procapra gutturosa*), 3 magpies (genus *Pica*), 3 snowfowls (genus *Tetraogallus*), 353 fish, and logs. As an extension of the Eco-2022 operation, professional training of wildlife guards is provided at the Higher School of Internal Affairs.

Mongolian Police, March 4, 2022; Eguur.mn, March 17, 2022.³²



SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

January 25, 2022

Pauah, Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Destruction by fire of the evidence of 14 closed criminal cases, namely 2 kg of narcotics, marijuana, and methamphetamines, as well as 34.2 kg of pangolin scales and 3 hornbill beaks seized in April 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 243). Khazminang.id, January 25, 2022.³³



February 12, 2022

Deli Tua, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Arrest of "L.", seller, and "A.S.", buyer, for trading 1.9 kg of pangolin scales and a 120-gram helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I) beak. "L." admits to buying pangolin scales and bird's nests from a certain "H." living in the South Aceh regency. He claims that his profit on one kg of scales is 150,000 rupiah (10.40 US\$). As for the bird's nests, it is around 300,000 to 500,000 rupiah (20.80 to 34.70 US\$).

Tribun-Medan, February 23, 2022; Kompas.com, February 24, 2022.³⁴



February 22, 2022

Baluran National Park, Situbondo Regency, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

Six animals seized from individuals are released after a period of rehabilitation. They are 2 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), 2 Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*, Appendix I), a green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II), and a Sunda porcupine (*Hystrix javanica*).

VOI, 22 February 2022.³⁵



February 22, 2022

Pamenang, Merangin Regency, Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Arrest of H.M., aged 32, who was trying to sell 7 kg of pangolin scales, 18 claws and 3 fangs of clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) and 36 claws and 3 fangs of Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) on the street. IDN Times Sumut, March 3, 2022.³⁶



February 28, 2022

Port of Sorong, West Papua Province, New Guinea Island, Indonesia

Seizure on board the *Gunung Dempo* of 2 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), one coconut lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*, Appendix II), one hooded butcherbird (*Cracticus cassicus*), 9 mangrove monitors (*Varanus indicus*, Appendix II), 14 emerald monitors (*Varanus prasinus*, Appendix II), 5 crocodile monitors (*Varanus salvadorii*, Appendix II), 4 peach-throated monitors (*Varanus jobiensis*, Appendix II), 3 blue tree monitors (*Varanus macraei*, Appendix II), 15 green tree pythons (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II), one Papuan python (*Apodora papuana*, Appendix II), and 3 white-lipped pythons (*Leiopython albertisii*, Appendix II).

The *Gunung Dempo* connects Jakarta (Java) to Jayapura (Papua) in one week with stops in the ports of Tanjung Priok (Java), Surabaya, Makassar (South Sulawesi), Sorong, Manokwari, Wasior and Nabire (Papua). The official capacity of the ship is 1,583 passengers but it is frequently overcrowded. When there is no more room in the dormitories, passengers complain that they have to sleep on the decks, in the corridors or even in the lifeboats. VOI, March 1, 2022.³⁷



The *Gunung Dempo* in Jayapura (Papua), June 2020

Early March 2022

Pakem, Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta Special Territory, Java Island, Indonesia

Seizure of a brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II), a yellow-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), a green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II), a slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), a binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India), and a porcupine held at a restaurant. KabarHandayani, March 16, 2022.³⁸

March 11, 2022

Lubuk Begalung, City of Padang, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Arrest of Mr. A. D., aged 30, who was caught selling 3 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), a Sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*, Appendix I), and an Asian giant tortoise (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II), all alive. He is suspected of selling wild animals online on Facebook and WhatsApp. He admitted to the BKSDA that he bought the animals from third parties: the leopard cats for 200,000 rupiah each or 14 US\$ (resold for 350,000 rupiah or 24 US\$), the pangolin for one million rupiah or 70 US\$ (resold for 3 million rupiah or 209 US\$), and the tortoise for 200,000 rupiah or 14 US\$ (resold for 500,000 rupiah or 35 US\$). He is suspected of being part of the same ring as M.I.H. who was arrested a few days earlier with 472 pig-nosed turtles (*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II) and 6 Asian giant tortoises (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II) (see page 156).

VOI, March 15, 2022; Mongabay, March 19, 2022.³⁹



MALAYSIA

Early March 2022

Seri Kembangan, State of Selangor, Malaysia

Arrest of a woman illegally holding 2 blue monkeys (*Cercopithecus mitis*, Appendix II) and 3 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II). The estimated value is 240,000 ringgit (57,140 US\$). The Sun Daily, March 24, 2022.⁴⁰



March 9, 2022

Subang Jaya, State of Selangor, Malaysia

Seizure at a man's home and nearby store of 3 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) and 70 birds of different species. Estimated value: 320,000 ringgits (76,190 US\$). One arrest. The Sun Daily, March 24, 2022.⁴¹

PHILIPPINES

February 10, 2022

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines

The Thai traffickers had included in a shipment of 38,188 live tropical fish divided in 51 packages 2 packages containing 182 Chinese softshell turtles (*Pelodiscus sinensis*) and 120 "horned" frogs (genus *Ceratophrys*). 718 aquatic plants of the genus *Anubias* and 260 aquatic plants of the genus *Microsorium* were also found and seized by Customs. The overall value is 3.5 million pesos or 68,360 US\$. Bureau of Customs, February 16, 2022; Department of Environment and Natural Resources, February 22, 2022.⁴²

THAILAND

January 12, February 1 and 14, 2022
Khao Phu Luang Forest, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Phu Wiang National Park, Khon Kaen Province, Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park, Rayong Province, Thailand



Cleaning operation:

- In Khao Phu Luang forest, the soldiers removed 28 wire snares that will not maim wild animals. A thorough inspection of the surrounding area is planned to remove more.
 - In Phu Wiang National Park, 11 wire snares have been removed. Wire snares are not selective. They indiscriminately take hold of elephants, tigers, gaurs, deer, bears...
 - In Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park, 161 traps including nylon nooses were removed.
- Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, January 12, February 1 and 14, 2022.⁴³



Khao Phu Luang Forest



Phu Wiang National Park



Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park

January 19, 2022

Between Mukdahan, Mukdahan Province and That Phanom, Nakhon Phanom Province, Thailand. Border with Laos.

Seizure of the carcasses of an Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India), 4 shrew-faced squirrels (*Rhinosciurus laticaudatus*), 3 Pallas's squirrels (*Callosciurus erythraeus*), 125 Indochinese flying squirrels (*Hylopetes phayrei*), 46 red-cheeked flying squirrel (*Hylopetes spadiceus*), 20 long-tailed giant rat (*Leopoldamys sabanus*), 38 kg of golden apple snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*) meat and 171 kg of *Hemiplecta distincta* in 7 fertilizer bags thrown away from a van as inspectors approached. Siamrath, January 20, 2022; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, January 21, 2021.⁴⁴

February 4, 2022

Khao Phra Wihan National Park, Thailand

Seizure of the carcasses of a southern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II) weighing 10 kg and a small Indian civet (*Viverricula indica*, Appendix III in India) weighing 2.8 kg in the bag of a man riding a motorcycle. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, February 4, 2022.⁴⁵

February 6, 2022

Village No. 9, Sam Ngam District, Phichit Province, Thailand

Lee Thiangyoo had a license for traditional farming, but he did not have a license for breeding long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) and two-banded monitors (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II). When the officers arrived, Lee refused to give them access to his buildings while Wang Jahan and Anant Sripha, employees, attempted to dispose of evidence. When the officers finally gained entry to the premises, they identified 21 long-tailed macaques and 39 two-banded monitor lizards. Some of the monitor lizards were tied up in bags, ready to be shipped. Officers suspect Lee of trafficking to Cambodia. The animals would then be sold to Chinese or Vietnamese restaurants. In October 2021, a convoy of 45 long-tailed macaques was intercepted at the border with Cambodia (see "On the Trail" n°34 p. 129).

Bangkok Post, February 7, 2022; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, February 7, 2022.⁴⁶



VIET NAM

January 8, 2022

Suoi Ngo, Tay Ninh Province, Viet Nam. Border with Cambodia

The man had posted on social networks an advertisement for the sale of a bottle of king cobra wine (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) and 5 bear claws (Ursidae, Appendix I or II). He was arrested by police officers posing as buyers. A search of his home resulted in the additional seizure of a live king cobra, a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), a bottle of monocled cobra wine (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II), 20 South Asian box turtles (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II), 5 yellow-headed tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II) and a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II). ENV, January 10, 2022; Báo Bao ve pháp luật, January 12, 2022.⁴⁷



© ENV

January 14, 2022

Bo Y Border Gate, Kon Tum Province, Viet Nam. Border with Laos.

The customs officers had flair when they decided to check the incoming truck, which was supposed to carry bananas. There were bananas in the trailer, but under the bananas, there was also a live pangolin (*Manis* spp., Appendix I) weighing 6 kg, 11 live turtles including one softshell turtle (family Trionychidae), 2 live porcupines, 4 mustelids including 2 dead ones and 28 kg of wild boar meat. Nguyen Duc Hung, the driver, is questioned.

Customs News, January 15, 2022; ENV, January 17, 2022.⁴⁸



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January 2022

Xuyen Moc District, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Viet Nam

Sentence to 14 months in prison of a man who offered to sell wildlife products via several Facebook accounts. In June 2021, police seized from his home 5 Asian black bear claws (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), 2 Malayan sun bear claws (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), a piece of jewelry made of a snow leopard claw (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I), a leopard skull (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), and 3 boar tusks.

ENV, February 9, 2022.⁴⁹

facebook



February 21, 2022

Son Hoa District, Phu Yen Province, Viet Nam

Arrest of Trinh Duy Xuan who was wanted since November 2001 for selling tiger bones (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), rhino horns, and "rare animal bile."

Kinhthepus.vn (with Phapluatplus.vn), March 9, 2022.⁵⁰



March 29, 2022

Con Cuong District, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

14-month suspended sentence for attempting to sell in September 2021 a patch of tiger skin (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 2 bear claws and 5 bear fangs (Ursidae, Appendix I or II).

ENV, April 1, 2022.⁵¹



SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

January 6, 2022

Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal State, India

Joint action of the WCCB and the 34th Battalion of the SSB on Thursday. Result: one Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix I) skin and one tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) seized, one arrest.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), January 8, 2022.⁵²



January 12, 2022

Gharial Dubi, Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Baba Hazarika, an alleged drug kingpin, is arrested. In the courtyard of his estate, a lorry arrived at around 4 a.m. It was searched by the police on the lookout. Sixty soap boxes were found inside a false compartment of the fuel tank. They contained 785 grams of heroin. In Hazarika's flat, wildlife decorations were also seized, elephant bones, deer trophies (family Cervidae), a tortoise or turtle shell and raccoon tails (genus *Procyon*). Northeast Now, January 13, 2022.⁵³



January 18, 2022

Changutola, Balaghat District, and Chhindwara District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of a tiger skin (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) and a spotted deer skin (*Axis axis*). Three people are arrested on the spot, four more a little later. They were organizing tantric rituals supposed to bring "prosperity". The Free Press Journal, January 18, 2022.⁵⁴



February 2, 2022

Pimpalgaon, Bhandara District, State of Maharashtra, India

Dirty trick in the thickets. The "zudpi jungle" of brush and high trees was hiding 5 animals who died of poisoning, a female leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a jungle cat (*Felis chaus*, Appendix II), 2 Bengal foxes (*Vulpes bengalensis*, Appendix III in India) and 2 domestic dogs. News 18, February 5, 2022; The Times of India, February 6, 2022.⁵⁵



FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 4, 2022

Nashik, Nashik District, State of Maharashtra, India

Garg, Deputy Conservator of Forest, arrests Wasim Shaikh and Farooq Shaikh in their aquarium shop and with his team seizes 3 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I), a spotted pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), 2 crowned river turtles (*Hardella thurjii*, Appendix II), an Indian black turtle (*Melanochelys trijuga*, Appendix II) and other unspecified turtles, all alive, 4 Indian hedgehogs (*Paraechinus micropus*), 16 Alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) and rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) chicks, and 2 "horned" frogs (genus *Ceratophrys*) from South America.

Deshdoot Times, February 5, 2022; The Times of India, February 6, 2022.⁵⁶

February 7, 2022

Nashik, Nashik District, State of Maharashtra, India

A store selling religious articles has been collared again (see "On the Trail" n°30 p. 170). Once more, under the pretext of selling accessories for puja (ritual of offerings), Kailas Kulthe, the owner of the shop, was also selling animal parts used by black magic practitioners: Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), Indian crested porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) quills, wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) teeth, black coral (order Antipatharia), sea fans (order Alcyonacea)...

The Times of India, February 8, 2022; TV9 Marathi, February 8, 2022.⁵⁷

February 11 and 12, 2022

Jagdalpur, Bastar District and Dantewara District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Successive seizures of 19 kg of pangolin scales, 5 leopard claws (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and 4 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I). Five arrests. Joint operation of Madhya Pradesh WCCB and Chhattisgarh Forest Department. WCCB, February 13, 2022; The Times of India, February 14, 2022.⁵⁸



February 14, 2022

Khapa, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of 4 kg of spotted deer meat (*Axis axis*) and 3 turtles thanks to the vigilance of the NGOs Wildlife Welfare Society and Pashu Pakshi Sanrakshan Sanstha. Arrest of Lakhan Murlidhar Tumane and Kunal Shende. The Live Nagpur, February 15, 2022.⁵⁹

February 16, 2022

Padagada, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of 3.5 kg of pangolin scales, 2 leopard teeth and 29 leopard claws and 46 parakeets (Psittaciformes, Appendix I or II except 4 species) at Nanda Bage. Ommcom News, February 16, 2022; The Statesman, February 16, 2022.⁶⁰



Night of March 2 to 3, 2022

Datoda, Indore District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of an Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I) and a Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) from Mukesh Jambre. Police night operation. The Times of India, March 4, 2022.⁶¹

March 14, 2022

Badlapur, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India



Kuldip Nikam has it all. He broke the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, the Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Act and the Wildlife Protection Act. He prophesied that his 9-year-old nephew had the profile of a murderer and rapist and that he should be tortured to prevent him from committing crimes in the future. A self-proclaimed man of God and former commercial smooth talker, Nikam beat the child's sex with sticks and then locked him, naked, in a bathroom for several hours. The impostor undoubtedly had other martyrs in his clientele and under his influence. At his home and that of his 2 accomplices were seized "ghost detection machines", 2 tiger skins (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), a snake skin and wild animal teeth, all accessories to his smokescreens that enabled him to extort large sums of money from disorientated families or individuals.

Hindustan Times, March 23, 2022.⁶²

March 25, 2022

Kharghar, Raigad District, State of Maharashtra, India



Seizure of a hoard of wildlife items by the WCCB and the District Forestry Division including religious figurines, bracelets, necklaces, pendants, ivory chess boards and boxes, one canine tooth from a tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) or leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 4 shells, and one Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), March 26, 2022.⁶³

SRI LANKA

January 2022

Nuwara Eliya, Central Province, Sri Lanka



Sentence of 3 Russian citizens, Ignatenko Alexander, Artem Ryabov, and Nikolai Kilafyan, to a fine of 2.88 million rupees each (14,365 US\$) or 3 months in prison in case of non-payment. They were originally arrested in February 2020 in Horton Plains National Park. They had poached more than 550 scorpions, chameleons, lizards, frogs, spiders, snakes, and rare plants (see "On the Trail" n°28 p. 132)

The Sunday Times, January 30, 2022.⁶⁴

WESTERN ASIA

TURKIYE

March 2022

Kapikule Border Crossing, Edirne Province, border with Bulgaria, Türkiye

Seizure of 120 ferret furs (*Mustela furo*) and 3 mink furs in the 2 suitcases of a passenger in a bus coming from Bulgaria.

RayHaber, March 31, 2022.⁶⁵

March 2022

Sarp Border Crossing, Artvin Province, Border with Georgia, Türkiye



Seizure of 85 chinchilla skins (*Chinchilla* spp., Appendix I), 3 lynx skins (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II) and 20 marten skins from a passenger's luggage.

RayHaber, March 31, 2022.⁶⁶

WESTERN EUROPE

BELGIUM

January 12, 2022

Brussels, Brussels Capital Region, Belgium



Three individuals were sentenced to 6 to 8-month suspended prison terms and fines of 1,200 € to 8,000 € (1,360 to 9,070 US\$). The first had attempted to import 3 kg of crocodile meat (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the second a boa constrictor skin (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) from Colombia, and the third turtle carcasses from Ethiopia. They had all been arrested at Brussels airport.

Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, December 14, 2021; VRT, January 12, 2022; Afrik 21, January 14, 2022.⁶⁷

January 26, 2022

Evere, Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium

One python (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), 3 scorpions, 4 turtles, 2 bearded dragons, 16 beetles and no less than 52 tarantulas were seized by the police in an apartment, from which a strong smell of cannabis was emitted. In addition to this violation of the legislation on the protection of animal welfare, 228 grams of cannabis, 37 plants as well as several lamps necessary for growing were also seized. The investigation continues.

Le Soir, February 4, 2022; RTBF, February 7, 2022.⁶⁸

January 19, 2022

Espiet, Department of Gironde, France

Seizure of 46 animals from a private home by the judicial authorities. Two tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), one leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), one ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I), macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II), parrots (Psittaciformes, Appendix I or II), one crested porcupine (*Hystrix cristata*) and wallabies (family Macropodidae) were transferred to the La Tanière shelter.

La Tanière, January 21, 2022; L'Echo Républicain, January 21, 2022; France 3 Nouvelle-Aquitaine, January 24, 2022; France Bleu Gironde, January 26, 2022; Gendarmerie de la Gironde, February 1, 2022.⁶⁹



FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 27, 2022

Tours, Department of Indre-et-Loire, France

A couple of nest robbers and amateur taxidermists claiming to be "addicted" have been sentenced to modest fines of 500 and 1,000 € (570 and 1,130 US\$), half of which were suspended, for decades of stuffing dozens of animals, including a little owl (*Athene noctua*, Appendix II), a crocodilian (Crocodylia, Appendix I or II) and an ostrich (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries), as well as possessing a lion's head (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) and elephant tusks from a trip to Africa and a circus. Odette and Jean, not their real names, were selling deer skulls (family Cervidae) with antlers via the internet for 150 and 250 € (170 and 280 US\$).

La Nouvelle République, February 2, 2022.⁷⁰



January 31, May 24 and June 1, 2022
Albertville, Department of Savoie, France

After the poisoning of 2 bearded vultures (*Gypaetus barbatus*, Appendix II) with a banned pesticide suspected to be carbofuran or another brand containing carbamates (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.186), 2 grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), beech martens (*Martes foina*), red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and crows (family Corvidae) in the Vanoise Park in March and April 2021, the investigation has stalled. A late and unsuccessful search of 11 farmers' homes took place at the end of May and the Albertville prosecutor's office announced on June 1 that, despite the intentional nature of the poisoning, the legal proceedings were about to be abandoned.

Le Monde, January 30, 2022; France Bleu Pays de Savoie, January 31, 2022; France 3 Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, May 31 and June 1, 2022.⁷¹



SPAIN

OPERATION RIB TOOL

January 23, 2022

Provinces of Alava, Gipuzkoa and Biscay, Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, and Autonomous Community of Cantabria, Spain



Dismantling of a gang of 9 wildlife traffickers. About 100 ivory objects, snake skins, including python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) ones, as well as live lizards and snakes were seized during the investigation. The animals and products were sold online and then delivered by parcel from the Basque Country. A royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and lizards were found in shoe boxes at the Foronda-Gasteiz airport. The ivory objects alone are estimated at 1,700 € (1,925 US\$). Guardia Civil, January 23, 2022.⁷²

March 20, 2022

San Bartolomé de Tirajana, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

The heirs were pleased to get rid of this bulky and illegal legacy. The deceased had set up a private zoo on his property. The Guardia Civil seized 439 animals, including 21 specimens listed in the CITES Appendices and 118 belonging to invasive alien species: 2 Asiatic rock pythons (*Python molurus*, Appendix II), a royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), 7 colubrids (family Colubridae), a Cuvier's smooth-fronted caiman (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*, Appendix II), a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II), a red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), 3 African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), 2 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), a common snake-necked turtle (*Chelodina longicollis*), 13 giant blue-tongued skinks (*Tiliqua gigas*), 8 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), 2 central bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*), a leopard gecko (*Eublepharis macularius*), an American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*), 46 giant African land snails (*Lissachatina fulica*), 34 white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), and hundreds of rodents and insects intended to be fed to the reptiles.

Guardia Civil, March 20, 2022.⁷³

ITALY

Mid-March 2022

Misterbianco, Metropolitan City of Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy

The carabinieri had come to inspect an undeclared Nero Siciliano pig farm. They left with 25 pigs but also with European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and 2 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II). The birds were released and the tortoises handed over to a wildlife center.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, March 15, 2022.⁷⁴

MONTENEGRO

January 13, 2022

Blizna, Municipality of Podgorica, Montenegro

Miljan Milickovic, founder of the NGO Prihvatilišta za oporavak životinja (a shelter that houses 300 animals), is up in arms against the trade and abuse of protected wild animals in his country. According to him, people call him every week to ask what to do with crocodiles (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), alligators (*Alligatoridae*, Appendix I or II), monkeys (*Primates*, Appendix I or II), tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) or lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II). But recently Miljan Milickovic is angry for a different reason. The environmental authorities are planning to build a center to accommodate CITES species in Berane. "What a waste of money when my shelter exists!" he says.

In fact, Miljan Milickovic may not be in order or disinterested. Authorities found during a January 13 inspection that all the animals housed at the shelter lacked permits and certificates of origin. Moreover, according to CZIP (Center for Protection and Research of birds of Montenegro), instead of rehabilitating brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) who had been entrusted to him by a family, he kept them to offer visitors to take photos with them and pet them for a fee.

Prihvatilišta za oporavak životinja had received temporary permits in March 2020 to keep, among others, a brown bear, a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), owls (*Strigiformes*, Appendix I or II), 4 ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries) and parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II). Milickovic had been holding them for several years without any documentation.

Monitor, February 25, 2022.⁷⁵

January 16, 2022

Municipality of Bijelo Polje, Montenegro. Border with Serbia.

R. Z., aged 18, is arrested with 2 turtles and an "exotic" bird that he brought from Serbia.

Government of Montenegro, January 29, 2022.⁷⁶

EASTERN EUROPE

BULGARIA

February 21, 2022

Poldiv, Plovdiv Province, Bulgaria

Seizure of a common otter (*Lutra lutra*, Appendix I), a red-breasted goose (*Branta ruficollis*, Appendix II) and a marbled polecat (*Vormela peregusna*), all stuffed, used as decoration in a store.

Bulgarian News Agency, February 21, 2022.⁷⁷

POLAND

Mid-February 2022

Nowy Sącz, Lesser Poland Voivodeship, Poland

Indictment of the owner of several pet shops in Nowy Sącz and Limanowa. On August 7, 2020, dead or pitiful animals had been found there, including a primate, parrots, snakes, hamsters and fish. He is not only charged with cruelty to animals, but also with the illegal sale of protected species.

miastoNS.pl, February 14, 2022; Nowy Sącz Nasze Miasto, February 14, 2022; Głos 24, February 15, 2022.⁷⁸

ROMANIA

March 22, 2022

Judet of Covasna, Romania

Two 43-year-old men are in the sights of justice after a firearm, cartridges and 13 skins of wild cat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II), lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II), grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), golden jackal (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and 37 skulls of red deer and roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) were seized at their homes.

Observatorul de Covasna, March 24, 2022.⁷⁹



RUSSIA

Mid-March 2022

Loukhsky District, Republic of Karelia, Russia

The authorities put an end to the activities of 2 prolific poachers. Their specialty was selling, "including to European Union countries," rare stuffed animals, their skins, or objects made with animal parts, such as a stool with deer feet (family Cervidae). Their prey included white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I), lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II), wolverines (*Gulo gulo*), red squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*), grouse (genus *Lyrurus*) and loons (genus *Gavia*). The ecological damage is estimated at 2 million rubles (19,425 US\$).

Aargoumenty i Fakty (AIF), March 26, 2022; Hibiny, March 16, 2022.⁸⁰



March 16, 2022

Volgograd, Volgograd Oblast, Russia

The resident of the Karachayevo-Circassian Republic (700 km away), a truck driver, told the traffic police officers that he was taking 2 "kittens" to the Karachayevo-Circassian Republic. In reality, he had in his truck 2 lion cubs (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II) 4 to 5 months old, a puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I or II) 7 to 8 months old, a green monkey (*Chlorocebus sabaeus*, Appendix II) and a western crowned pigeon (*Goura cristata*, Appendix II) alive, and about 20 crates overflowing with saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), a good thousand in all. The animals were thin, starving, and not accompanied by any documentation. They were turned over to a shelter run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Regnum, March 17, 2022; Volga-Caspian News Agency, March 17, 2022.⁸¹



March 23, 2022

Federal City of Sevastopol, Russia

Eight websites advertising the sale of protected animals were blocked at the request of the prosecutor. The animals included a gibbon (*Hylobatidae*, Appendix I), a white-eared marmoset (*Callithrix aurita*, Appendix I), a capuchin (*Cebus* spp., synonymous with *Sapajus* spp., Appendix II), a Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II), a bar-headed goose (*Anser indicus*), and a great white pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*). Sevastopol Correspondent, March 23, 2022.⁸²



End of March 2022

Razdole, Leningrad Oblast, Russia

The manager of a recreation center is in trouble. Rosprirodnadzor officers discovered that he was displaying an Asiatic wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*, Appendix II) and a Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II). He does not have a permit to keep animals listed in the Red Book. The microchip of the wild Asian dog indicates that she was born in 2017 at the Budapest Zoo and was sent to Novosibirsk Oblast in compliance with the CITES Convention. The owl, however, is not chipped. It would come from Penza oblast.

LentV24, March 29, 2022; Petersburg Newspaper, March 29, 2022.⁸³

CZECHIA

February 2-3, 2022

Radhošť, Pardubice Region, Czechia

During the search of a falconer's house, authorities discover protected felines, including a lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix II) and a serval (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II), along with birds.

Ekolist.cz, February 3, 2022.⁸⁴



Mid-March 2022

Klatovy District, Plzeň Region, Czechia

Sentence of Bohumil M., aged 60, president of a hunting association, to a fine of 90,000 korun (4,000 US\$) and the withdrawal of his hunting license for 5 years. The customs officers had found a lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) shot dead in his freezer in July 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.95), but also the carcasses of a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), a honey buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*, Appendix II), a Eurasian sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II), a western capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*), a spotted nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*), an elk (*Alces alces*) and a European beaver (*Castor fiber*). Although the investigation established that he had shot 2 lynxes, the court considered that the evidence was not sufficient. Bohumil M. keeps saying that he found the lynx already dead.

Denik, December 16, 2021; Ekolist.cz, March 17, 2022; Plzenska Drbna, March 18, 2022.⁸⁵



UKRAINE

January 1 and 8, 2022

Mykolaiv, Mykolaiv Oblast, Ukraine

The animal showmen are still walking in the streets of Mykolaiv (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.196 and n°34 p.179). Since the last time, they have innovated a little by adding small monkeys to their traditional stock of white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I). Some of them do not hesitate to force parents to pay 800 hryvnias (30 US\$) after taking pictures of their children. Thanks to the intervention of animal protection activists and police officers, the family got their money back. However, the authorities showed little willingness to seize the animals. Only 2 white-tailed eagles were confiscated from the showmen and handed over to the zoo.

NikVesti, January 1 and 2, 2022; Novosti N, January 1 and 5, 2022; News of Mykolaiv, January 8 and 10, 2022.⁸⁶

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

March 2022

Sunshine Coast, State of Queensland, Australia

Three animals are victims of serial air gun attacks. The Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital in Beerwah was able to save a possum and a lace monitor (see page 166), but an eastern osprey (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*, synonymous with *Pandion cristatus*, Appendix II) did not survive. A reward is offered for any useful information.

ABC News, April 4, 2022.⁸⁷

VARIOUS MARINE SPECIES

AFRICA

FRANCE (SOUTHERN AND ANTARCTIC LANDS)

OPERATION POL PECHE

March 13, 2022

Juan de Nova Island, French Southern and Antarctic Lands, France

Early in the morning, a gendarme noticed the little game of a small pirogue off the island. A man dives, surfaces, and dives again. Other people are busy on a mother ship a little further away. After giving them time to act, the police intervened in the early afternoon. First the pirogue: 3 individuals are in possession of sea cucumbers, which are immediately released into the water. Then the mother ship, next to which 2 pirogues are navigating: 11 Malagasy suspects have about 90 sea cucumbers, about 10 cut sharks and 10 rays, also cut, on board. Dead or alive, all the animals were put back in the water. For all their equipment, the poachers had 2 spears, a fishing line, masks, fins, and snorkels.

The Malagasy press denounced a French "coup" which would have ruined honest fishermen acting in accordance with international law. Juan de Nova Island, located in the Mozambique Channel, is claimed by Madagascar.

Gendarmerie of La Réunion, April 6, 2022; Testimonies, April 8, 2022.¹

ASIA

CHINA

Early January 2022

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Shanghai Municipality, China

Seizure of 5 jewelry items made from nautilus shells (Nautilidae, Appendix II) and 41 made from stony corals (Scleractinia, Appendix II) in a package. Total weight, 61.3 grams and 282.5 grams.

Chinese Customs, January 13, 2022.²

INDIA

Night of January 1 to 2, 2022

Vedalai, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 490 kg of shark fins, 120 kg of processed and dried sea cucumbers and 1,700 kg of turmeric. Found in the warehouse of a certain Saddam Hussain, the shipment was to be smuggled to Sri Lanka. The value of the sea cucumbers alone is estimated at 1.2 million rupees (16,142 US\$).

India Today, January 2, 2022; The Times of India, January 3, 2022.³



March 1, 2022

Akkaraipettai, Nagapattinam District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 248 kg of processed sea cucumbers, 812 kg being sun-dried, 4 kg of seahorses and 16 kg of shark fins ready for export. Stoves, gas bottles, tarpaulins, boxes and storage barrels were the tools of T. Murugananatham who had been operating under the guise of a fish drying business for months. The New Indian Express, March 2, 2022.⁴

EUROPE

POLAND

January 2022

Dorohusk, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. Border with Ukraine.

Arrest of a Hungarian national in possession of a giant clam shell (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) weighing 223.25 grams and 2 corals weighing 464.15 and 722.59 grams.

TVN24, January 31, 2022.⁵

ASIA

CHINA

Early January 2022

Beihai, Beihai Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Eleven suspects were charged with trafficking corals, including stony corals (Scleractinia, Appendix II), between Viet Nam and China. The corals were then shipped to Guangdong, Tianjin and Shaanxi and sold at retail level via the internet or in aquarium shops. The gang was active at least between August 2020 and October 2021 and the total amount of smuggling and illegal trade is estimated at 10,599 corals, including 6,213 stony corals. Live corals were seized. They have been entrusted to the great oceanic aquarium of Beihai (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.257 and n°34 p.234). Shanghai Observer, January 10, 2022.¹

January 18, 2022

Yuelu District, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China

Seizure in a parcel of 2 red coral necklaces (genus *Corallium*). Total weight, 180 grams. Chinese Customs, January 20, 2022.²

March 24, 2022

Changsha, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China

Same day seizure in 2 incoming parcels of a necklace and a ring made of red coral (genus *Corallium*). Chinese Customs, March 25, 2022.³

EUROPE

ITALY

March 25, 2022

Verona International Airport, Province of Verona, Region of Veneto, Italy

Seizure in 2 steps from a flight coming from Egypt and a flight coming from the Maldives. Officials found a stony coral (*Acropora* spp., Appendix II) weighing approximately 720 grams and a stony coral (*Pocillopora* spp., Appendix II) weighing approximately 2,800 grams. Fines of 5,000 € (5,600 US\$). Customs and Monopolies Agency, March 25, 2022.⁴



POLAND

January 19, 2022

Kraków John Paul II International Airport, Lesser Poland Voivodeship, Poland



Seizure of a fragment of coral (class Anthozoa) in the luggage of a man returning from the Maldives. The official press release does not give his identity but Arkadiusz Tańcula, known as "Aroy" a fighter of MMA, a combat sport combining several disciplines, boasted about it on his Instagram account.

Radio Zet, January 19, 2022.⁵



GIANT CLAMS, GOOSENECK BARNACLES, DATE MUSSELS ...



Spider conch (genus *Lambis*). Photo In-Depth Images Kwajalein

AFRICA

EGYPT

Early April 2022

Port of Nuweiba, South Sinai Governorate, Egypt

Arrest of a Jordanian national transporting in his vehicle 585 kg of shellfish, including spider conch (genus *Lambis*).

Al-Ahram, April 11, 2022.¹



ASIA

CHINA

Early February 2022

Qixia, Jiangsu Province, China

Three giant clam shell bracelets (Tridacnidae, Appendix II). Total weight, 257.27 grams. Chinese Customs, February 12, 2022.²

February 2022

Jiangning, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizure in incoming mail of a giant clam shell go game set (Tridacnidae, Appendix II). Total weight, 1,024 grams.

Chinese Customs, February 21, 2022.³

February 2022

Wenzhou, Wenzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure in a parcel declared to contain "clothes" of a giant clam shell bracelet (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) weighing 25 grams.

Chinese Customs, March 2, 2022.⁴

Early March 2022

Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China

Seizure of a giant clam shell go game (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) in a parcel from abroad, 660 g.

Chinese Customs, March 10, 2022.⁵

EUROPE

SPAIN

January 19, 2022

Llanes, Principality of Asturias, Spain

Seizure of 29 kg of gooseneck barnacles (*Pollicipes pollicipes*) and the equipment used for their extraction during a vehicle check at kilometer 22.100 of the AS-379 (Ribadesella-Llanes). The driver, aged 32 and from Santander, had carried out his raid (only 6 kg are allowed) without a license and at night.

Europa Press, February 5, 2022.⁶



FRANCE

January 20, 2022

Quiberon, Department of Morbihan, France

More than 4.5 kg of gooseneck barnacles (*Pollicipes pollicipes*) were seized by soldiers of the nautical brigade from a shore fisherman. Two others got rid of their booty before the search. They recognized the facts of fishing in a prohibited period. The equipment was seized and the fishing product was destroyed in front of the 3 poachers who should be fined heavily.

Le Télégramme, January 21, 2022.⁷

REPEATED OFFENSE

Night of March 2 to 3 and March 28, 2022

Plomeur and Quimper, Department of Finistère, France

Seizure of 138 kg of gooseneck barnacles (*Pollicipes pollicipes*) and diving equipment in the car of 2 Spaniards. A kilo of gooseneck barnacles is worth about 200 € (225 US\$/kg) in Spain and Portugal. The haul is therefore estimated to be worth almost 28,000 € (31,400 US\$) on resale. The 2 men from Santander, aged 44 and 28, were convicted. The first, a professional fisherman, was fined 500 € (560 US\$) and had his car and car registration document confiscated. The second, a repeat offender who admitted to having fished 60 kg and having gotten 600 € (670 US\$) for it, was fined 2,000 € (2,240 US\$). Spanish gooseneck barnacle poachers are regularly arrested in Brittany, as in August 2021 with 200 kilos ("On the Trail" n°28 p.13). Ouest-France, March 5 and 28, 2022; Côte Quimper, March 28, 2022.⁸



ITALY

March 7, 2022

Metropolitan City of Bari, Region of Apulia, Italy

Seizure of 5 kg of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) ready to be sold in a fish shop. The fishmonger is indicted.

Ambient&Ambienti, March 12 and 15, 2022.⁹

March 11, 2022

Naples, Metropolitan City of Naples, Region of Campania, Italy

Members of 2 groups of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) poachers are sentenced to up to 6 years in prison after a 3-year investigation conducted jointly by the Coast Guard and the Guardia di Finanza. In addition, they have to reimburse the legal fees, and their vehicles and vessels are confiscated. The first group was "working" off Naples, the second in the Sorrento peninsula and particularly around the island of Capri. They had been active for about 20 years.

Kodami, March 11, 2022.¹⁰

Mid-March 2022

Taranto, Province of Taranto, Region of Apulia, Italy

The agents of the harbor master found in the water at the side of the quay of Via Cariati 10 bags each containing one kg of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II). The seizure was destroyed. Ambient&Ambienti, March 15, 2022.¹¹



MONTENEGRO

Early February 2022

Montenegro

The NGO Green Home is calling on the environmental authorities to increase controls and on citizens to boycott the date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) offered illegally in many restaurants.

Jadran Novi, February 11, 2022.¹²

Haliotis spp.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

January 5, 2022

Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa

On a tip, 3 abalone poachers were apprehended at night by the SAPS Maritime Boundary Unit, Rural Flying Squad, South African National Parks, Bitou Municipality Law Enforcement section, and a local security company. Police arrested the suspects and confiscated 2,973 abalones worth an estimated 700,000 rand (42,000 US\$) as well as diving equipment. The 3 men were taken into custody. The seizure was handed over to inspectors from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. SAPS, January 6, 2022.¹

January 12, 2022

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Arrest of 2 abalone poachers in Sardinia Bay with 2 vehicles containing diving equipment and cameras. The 20-year-old suspects were taken into custody for conspiracy to commit an offense. In the previous 2 weeks, the anti-poaching unit supported by a drone had confiscated more than 30 pieces of diving equipment and 3 vehicles. Sowetan LIVE, January 12, 2022.²

January 17, 2022

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Several bags containing 599 abalones were seized by members of the National Response Unit, assisted by Fish Hoek Police, from a white VW Polo stopped on the highway. A 26-year-old male was arrested and taken into custody for possession of an endangered marine species. The suspect is scheduled to appear in Bishop Lavis Magistrate Court.

SAPS, January 18, 2022.³

January 18, 2022

Cradock, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2,510 abalones in 26 garbage bags in a van 40 km from Cradock with an estimated value of 346,000 rand or 21,770 US\$. The driver was arrested and his vehicle seized. SAPS, January 18, 2022.⁴

January 20, 2022

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Following their arrest on October 10, 2021 in their sweatshop, the judicial record of Wu Jieyong, Ren Keng, Chinese nationals, and Justice Jairo Moyo, a Zimbabwean national, is as follows: 2 years' imprisonment for selling, receiving or possession of illegal abalone, 3 years for operating an illegal abalone processing establishment, 2 years for transport or possession of abalone not in a whole state, 2 years for selling, delivering or acquiring of abalone without a prescribed invoice. All sentences are suspended for 5 years. In addition, they are fined 100,000 rand (6,300 US\$) or sentenced to a 3 month-jail sentence. SAPS, January 21, 2022.⁵

January 26, 2022

Northern Cape Province, South Africa

Wanted. Anyone with information on the whereabouts of Matthieu Ndjayi-Shongo is urged to contact the Hawks. The 42-year-old man was arrested in February 2020 during a traffic stop. He was carrying 860 kg of dried abalone (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.9) valued at 7 million rand (550 US\$/kg). Released on bail for 30,000 rand (2,000 US\$), he has not been heard from since August 2021. SAPS, January 26, 2022.⁶



February 17, 2022

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

The Datsun was driving on the N2 towards Cape Town at 7 a.m. in the bus lane during peak traffic times. For this traffic violation, the car was stopped. The driver and the passenger fled, the first one was caught. Between the seats there were 2,888 abalones in 28 plastic bags.

News24, February 17, 2022.⁷



February 28, 2022

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

The investigation started in 2019. A meat export company is suspected of slipping abalone into batches of meat. Three men have just been arrested by the Hawks. They are charged with racketeering, money laundering and contravention of the Marine Living Resources Act. Among the exhibits are accounting records and computers.

SAPS, March 1, 2022.⁸

March 3, 2022

Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Thembelani Hawule was charged. He was arrested by the Rural Flying Squad on the N2 Expressway after receiving information about poaching in Plettenberg Bay. He was carrying 29 abalones.

SAPS, March 6, 2022; The Herald, March 8, 2022.⁹

March 9, 2022

Polokwane, Limpopo Province, South Africa

The truck is driving on the N1 expressway. It is intercepted on the outskirts of the city. In the trailer, there are 76 boxes full of abalone. The total value of the loot is estimated at 9 million rand or 592,700 US\$. The driver is in custody. The truck worth 500,000 rand or 32,930 US\$ was also seized. SAPS, March 9, 2022.¹⁰

ASIA

CHINA

February 22, 2022

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

Wong King-shou, 30, a senior inspector of the police public relations branch, is suspected of stealing 2 parcels of abalone that were seized in the frame of an investigation at Hong Kong Police Headquarters, Arsenal Street, on October 8, 2020. He has been released on bail. He must not change his residence and must not contact any of the 45 witnesses named in the file. He is prohibited from entering the scene of the alleged offense. He pleads not guilty. Surveillance camera recordings and recorded minutes of internal meetings are among the exhibits.

The Standard, February 22, 2022.¹¹

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

March 2, 2022

Bega, State of New South Wales, Australia

A total fine of 28,000 AU\$ (20,200 US\$) plus 12,400 AU\$ (8,950 US\$) in court costs for the 4 recreational fishermen who caught 185 undersized abalones in one morning. Recreational fishermen are allowed to take 2 abalones over 11.7 cm per day. In addition, the 4 men had obstructed the fisheries officer who caught them in the act of shucking abalone. Their diving equipment was permanently confiscated. 58 live abalones were returned to the sea off Tathra by the fisheries officers. Abalone is listed as a priority species under the New South Wales Fisheries Management Act. Yahoo News Australia, March 7, 2022.¹²



SEA CUCUMBERS AND SEA URCHINS



Black sea cucumber (*Holothuria forskali*). Photo Sylvain Le Bris

Holothuria fuscogilva, *Holothuria nobilis* et *Holothuria whitmaei* (teatfish): Appendix II.
Isostichopus fuscus: Appendix III in Ecuador.

AFRICA

EGYPT

March 20, 2022

Hurghada, Governorate of Red Sea, Egypt

Seizure of 116 kg of dried sea cucumbers and diving tanks. A suspect was arrested and remanded in custody for 4 days. He was drying the sea cucumbers on his roof.

AkhbarElYom, March 20, 2022; Egypt Independent, March 21, 2022; Al-Masri al-yom, March 27, 2022; Cairo 24, March 28, 2022.¹



AMERICA

PANAMA

End of January 2022

Panama-Tocumen International Airport, Panamá

Seizure of 5 kg of powdered sea cucumbers from Cameroon. Executive Decree 20 of May 21, 2019 prohibits the extraction, possession and marketing of sea cucumbers.

La Estrella de Panamá, January 29, 2022.²

ASIA

INDIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

January 15, 2022

Devipattinam, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Approximately 350 kg of fresh sea cucumbers were seized from a shed behind a house in which Mr. Shajahan, aged 45, was processing sea cucumbers purchased from local fishermen. "He was removing the intestine and boiling the catch in 2 big vessels when we caught him red-handed." =>

The sea cucumbers would be dried and handed over to bigger traders, who in turn would smuggle them to Sri Lanka. He is a second-time offender. "The last time a similar case was registered against him was in 2012," Forest Officer Jabez said. The accused has been charged under Section 9 (prohibition of hunting of wild animals specified in Appendices I, II, III and IV) and Sections 39, 40, 50, and 51 of the Wildlife Protection Act.

The Times of India, January 17, 2022.³

February 24, 2022

Off Kavaratti Islands, Union Territory of Lakshadweep, India

Seizure of 30 live sea cucumbers, worth an estimated 1.8 million rupees (23,980 US\$) and a boat. The poachers were trying to smuggle them to Vallanadu near Thoothukudi. Suresh (35), Jesu Nasaren Sakkariyar (34), Ponsis Raja (36), Arulananthu Xeviyar (30), Mohammed Rais Melayillam (28), Abdul Jabbar Kadappuratheillam (46) and Hussainer MI (34) were arrested.

The Times of India, February 26, 2022.⁴

MALAYSIA

March 17, 2022

Sandakan, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Twelve Vietnamese poacher-fishermen aged between 28 and 51 were arrested on 2 fishing boats. The contents of the seized barrels are estimated at 1.75 million ringgit (418,150 US\$).

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022; New Straits Times, March 18, 2022.⁵

THAILAND

March 22-23, 2022

Off Ko Kra Islands, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand

Seizure of a Vietnamese trawler that was dredging the ocean floor. The 5 crew members were arrested. Three other Vietnamese boats were spotted fishing for sea cucumbers in the Gulf of Thailand. Bangkok Post, March 24, 2022.⁶

March 31, 2022

Off Songkhla Province, Thailand

Three more Vietnamese boats intercepted fishing for sea cucumbers in territorial waters. The 15 poachers, who came from Ca Mau in southern Viet Nam, had been combing the seabed for 5 days. The Nation, April 1, 2022.⁷

TURKIYE

Early January 2022

Urla, Izmir Province, Türkiye

Rumors reach the ears of the port agents. There are reportedly diver-poachers at work around Karantina Island, just off Iskele Beach. An operation is launched. Four people are arrested with 120 kg of sea cucumbers and another with 25 kg. The 5 suspects are fined a total of 37,145 liras (2,860 US\$). Eight sea cucumber species have been recorded in Turkish waters (*Holothuria forskali*, *H. mammata*, *H. polii*, *H. sanctori*, *H. tubulosa*, *Stereoderma kirschbergii*, *Stichopus regalis* and *Synaptula reciprocans*). Yeni Asir, January 6, 2022.⁸



January 2022

Ayvalık, Balıkesir Province, Türkiye

Release of 550 kg of freshly caught sea cucumbers. The 11 poachers were fined a total of 47,982 liras (3,695 US\$).

Bursa Hakimiyet, February 1, 2022.⁹



January 2022

Seferihisar, Izmir Province, Türkiye

S.K. and H.S. were arrested while diving for sea cucumbers. They had already collected 92 kg, which were returned to the water. The 2 poachers were fined a total of 14,858 liras (1,145 US\$).

Seferihisar Yeni Haber, January 26, 2022.¹⁰



EUROPE

CROATIA

January 29, 2022

Bale, Istria County, Croatia

At 5 p.m., the police spot a BMW parked near the listed site of Fort Forno, a fortress built in 1904 by the Austrian Navy to protect the nearby harbor. The driver and his passenger are not there for historical tourism. They wear diving suits and in the trunk there are 12 buckets containing 205.4 kg of sea cucumbers.

Tportal, January 31, 2022.¹¹

March 12, 2022

Sukošan, Zadar County, Croatia

Joint operation of customs, police and fisheries inspectorate. A 30-year-old man is arrested in the act of fishing sea cucumbers. He already had 47 kg in his boat.

Slobodna Dalmacija, March 14, 2022.¹²

ITALY

January 20, 2022

Cabras, Province of Oristano, Autonomous Region of Sardinia, Italy

Arrest in the marine protected area of the Sinis Peninsula - Mal di Ventre Island of Su Zinnipiri of a poacher in possession of a bucket of sea urchins just caught. They were returned to the water. Logudorolive, January 21, 2022.¹³

January 22, 2022

Autonomous Region of Sardinia, Italy

The ban on sea urchin fishing comes into effect today for a period of 3 years (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.245).

La Nuova Sardegna, January 1, 2022.¹⁴

February 22, 2022

Island of San Domino, Province of Foggia, Region of Apulia, Italy

Four poachers were intercepted by the patrol boat *Polizia del Mare*. They had caught more than 4,000 purple sea urchins (*Paracentrotus lividus*), while the maximum daily quota is 50 specimens. Still alive, the sea urchins were released into the sea. The 4 individuals were fined. For one week, the agents have prevented the illegal sale of 300 kg of sea urchins. isNews, February 22, 2022.¹⁵



February 25 to March 7, 2022

Metropolitan City of Bari, Region of Apulia, Italy

For 10 days, the coast guard has intensified their checks at sea, at the landing of fishing boats and at the points of sale. They confiscated 7,000 sea urchins (800 kg) illegally fished and in contravention of the commercial and sanitary rules.

Ambient&Ambienti, March 12, 2022.¹⁶

March 18, 2022

Province of Taranto, Region of Apulia, Italy

A fisherman arrested by the coast guard with more than 200 sea urchins left with a fine of 1,000 € (1,120 US\$).

Ambient&Ambienti, March 21, 2022.¹⁷



RUSSIA

Early January 2022

Between Fokino and Dunay and between Artyom and Nakhodka, Primorsky Krai, Russia

- Arrest of a man aged 43 during a traffic stop. Seizure of 479 Japanese sea cucumbers (*Apostichopus japonicus*).

- Arrest of 2 men aged 23 and 24 during a traffic stop. Seizure of 380 Japanese sea cucumbers and 2 diving suits.

All sea cucumbers were released.

TASS Russian News Agency, January 10, 2022; VladNews, January 10, 2022.¹⁸

January 27, 2022

Ussury Bay, Primorsky Krai, Russia

A Russian citizen and 3 foreigners were caught red-handed by the FSB. They were trying to export more than 350 kg of dried Japanese sea cucumbers (*Apostichopus japonicus*), 140 liters of high quality alcohol bottles and 26 crates of Russian-made medicines. Total value: 20 million rubles (267,000 US\$). The closest countries are China and North Korea.

Russian Public Television (OTR), January 27, 2022; TASS Russian News Agency, January 27, 2022.¹⁹

February 2022

Khasansky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia

He was suspected of poaching, he is finally indicted for violence against an official. A suspected poacher of sea cucumbers did not hesitate to run over a customs officer who came to search him and then fled. The customs officer escaped serious injury and the suspect was immediately surrounded.

Gargoyle and Fakty (AIF), March 24, 2022.²⁰

Early February 2022

Khasansky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia

S., a former border guard, had been arrested and dismissed in 2020 for smuggling sea cucumbers. The investigation is ongoing. In order not to attend questioning, S. presented a medical certificate stating that he had to undergo medical treatment in Khabarovsk Krai, 850 km away. Unfortunately for him, his certificate has no legal value. His unjustified absence earned him 2 days of detention.

GTRK Vladivostok, February 9, 2022.²¹

March 29, 2022

Peter the Great Gulf, Slavyanka, Primorsky Krai, Russia

A Khabarovsk Krai resident accused of organizing a Japanese sea cucumber (*Apostichopus japonicus*) poaching ring in 2018 is indicted and detained pending trial. He employed 4 Khasansky District residents who are the subject to separate proceedings. The 5 men had caught 1,900 sea cucumbers in Peter the Great Gulf.

Moskovski Komsomolets Khabarovsk, March 29, 2022; News VL, March 29, 2022.²²

SEAHORSES

ASIA

INDIA

OPERATION WILEP

March 14, 2022

Howrah Railway Station, Howrah District, State of West Bengal, India

Acting on "secret sources," the RPF (Railway Protection Force) agents searched the Chennai Mail as it arrived at Howrah, the terminus. In the freight car, they found a dozen boxes containing a total of 40 bags of dried seahorses (51 kg). It was impossible to identify the sender. On the other hand, Imdad Munshi, who came to pick them up from Barabazar (290 km away), was immediately unmasked. These seahorses were probably going to supply ayurvedic stores. According to the CIB (Crime Investigation Bureau), trafficking of seahorses from South India via the Kolkata area (15 km from Howrah) is not uncommon, but this is the first time that a seizure has taken place on a train.

PiPa News, March 15, 2022; Railway Protection Force, March 15, 2022.¹



EUROPE

POLAND

March 2, 2022

Szczecin, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland

Seizure of 5 bottles of the brand "Golden Seahorse" each containing 100 capsules based on Japanese seahorse (*Hippocampus mohnikei*, Appendix II) and ginseng (*Panax ginseng*, Appendix II) extract in a parcel from Ukraine. "Natural sex tonic. For adults only. Take 2 tablets once or twice daily with warm water for 10 to 25 days."

National Revenue Administration, March 2, 2022.²



MARINE OR FRESHWATER FISH



Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*). Photo Bert Klangpremchitt

EASTERN AFRICA

SEYCHELLES

March 7, 2022

Off Mahé Island, The Seychelles

Sharks and red snappers (*Lutjanus campechanus*) were seized on board a foreign-flagged fishing vessel. The 12 non-native poachers on board were handed over to local authorities.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022.¹

NORTHERN AMERICA

CANADA

January 17, 2022

Vancouver, Province of British Columbia, Canada

For the introduction of 20,196 fins weighing about 550 kg of whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*, Appendix II) and silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II), Hang Hing Herbal Medicine Ltd. has been fined 75,000 \$ (58,700 US\$). On September 25, 2017, the company had imported a shipment of 22 bags of processed shark fins, declared as "fish bones". DNA testing was used to identify the species.

Gouvernement of Canada, January 18, 2022.²



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 6, 2022

Saint Petersburg, State of Florida, United States of America

The equivalent of over 4 and a half football fields of prohibited gillnets. The nets were used by 10 individuals from Atlanta, Georgia, to catch over 226 kg of sharks, trout (family Salmonidae), common snook (*Centropomus undecimalis*), sheephead (*Archosargus probatocephalus*), black drum (*Pogonias cromis*), and blue crabs (*Callinectes sapidus*). The whole was seized.

Marcos Lopez Navarrete (27), Ernesto Lopez Navarrete (35), Roberto Gonzalez Lopez (41), Carlos Lopez Santana (18), Fredy Lopez Navarrete (38), Fredy Lopez Reytez (18), Rafael Castro Herrera (40), Daniel Reytez Valente (26), Efren Lopez Navarrete (43), and Lorenzo Lopez Navarrete (40) were charged.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, January 6, 2022; Tampa Bay Times, January 7, 2022.³



February 4-5, 2022

Black Lake, State of Michigan, United States of America

Michigan Department of Natural Resources officers were on alert. It was the day before the opening of the lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*, Appendix II) fishing season. They discovered a fishing line left unattended overnight, then another. One of the fishermen, identified the next morning, admitted to the facts. Perhaps he wanted to get a head start... This year, the fishing season for lake sturgeon lasted only 36 minutes. The 6 authorized specimens were coveted by 565 participants.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, February 5, 2022; Cheboygan Daily Tribune, February 8, 2022.⁴



February 14, 2022

San Diego, State of California, United States of America

Eight months in prison followed by 2 years' supervised release and 3,000 US\$ in restitution for Marcos Esteban Gonzalez Acedo. He was arrested at the Mexico-USA border while attempting to smuggle 27 totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders, valued approximately at 270,000 US\$.

Environmental Crimes Monthly Bulletin, March 2022.⁵



End of February 2022

Off Mayport, State of Florida, United States of America

A boat was checked several miles off the coast. On board were sharks, red snappers (*Lutjanus campechanus*) and black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*). In the absence of the required federal HMS (Highly Migratory Species) permit in waters outside 3 miles and the descending device, several citations were issued. The descending devices allow to release into deep water prohibited fish that have been brought to the surface due to lack of gear selectivity. Released without a descending device, deep-sea fish have no chance of survival. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 3, 2022.⁶

March 2022

Scappoose Bay, State of Oregon, United States of America

Seizure of 5 white sturgeons (*Acipenser transmontanus*, Appendix II) which could be released. The poachers secured them hooked under their boat. They also used prohibited angling methods, such as barbed hooks, and did not have a license. One fisherman was cited and citations were issued.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, March 17, 2022.⁷



One of the 5 sturgeons caught was 2.2 meters long, probably a female over 80 years old

Mid-March 2022

Charlotte County, State of Florida, United States of America

Inspection of a vessel returning to port revealed 2 shark fillets. The fisherman was issued a Notice to Appear.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, March 17, 2022.⁸

March 15-16, 2022

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

Environmental officers spot a suspicious car on the Hudson River. The driver is not far away. He is holding a trash bag full of fish including striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*), catfish (order Siluriformes), white perch (*Morone americana*), and most importantly a shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*, Appendix I). The sturgeon will be displayed for educational purposes and the other fish were donated to a "wolf conservation center."

Department of Environmental Conservation, March 30, 2022.⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS/ REPEATED OFFENSE

March 30, 2022

Sacramento Valley, State of California, United States of America

Andrew Chao, aged 31, and Ay Pou Saechao, aged 35, living in Oakland, were suspected of poaching white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*, Appendix II), taking their eggs, and selling them to Igor, Lyudmila, Yevgeniy and Olga Petryanik in San Francisco. The latter made caviar from them and sold it. They were all indicted in May 2021.

=>

In January 2022, Chao and Saechao were back in the news. They reportedly resumed their poaching in Sacramento. On March 14, California Department of Fish and Wildlife agents managed to catch Chao near Knights Landing. There was a white sturgeon over 6 feet long in his car. Chao was arrested and the sturgeon was released.

This time, the investigators discovered a link to another sturgeon poaching case that had previously eluded them. After relentless surveillance, they arrested Chao, Saechao, Huan Van Nguyen, aged 72, Lai Chow Saechao, aged 34, Ou Hin Saetern, aged 37, Sengon Saechao, aged 32, Andy Serncho Saepanh, aged 35, Nai Fow Saechao, aged 39, and Choy Gwen Saephan, aged 32, at their homes on March 30. Together they allegedly poached 36 white sturgeons, using juvenile salmon as bait, and some of them sold red abalone (*Haliotis rufescens*) on the black market. They were not averse to poaching deer and trafficking in drugs and counterfeit money. They were also charged with illegal possession of firearms and littering. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, April 21, 2022.¹⁰

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

January 3, 2022

Coari, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Agents of the Arpão River Base seized 215 kilos of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) stored in the hold of a boat that was traveling down the Solimões River. The value of the catch is estimated to be worth 4,300 reais (764 US\$). Three poachers were taken to the police station of the Arpão base and were fined for environmental crime.

Em Tempo, January 4, 2022.¹¹



COLOMBIA

End of January 2022

Colombia

After a night chase, a foreign vessel was intercepted approximately 120 nautical miles off the coast of Nariño. The "El regreso de pajarito" (the return of the little bird) had 180 kg of fish on board: 11 common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*), one marlin (family Istiophoridae) and 7 silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II), including 4 juveniles. Four fishermen-poachers have been handed over to the Attorney General's office and will be prosecuted for border violation and illegal fishing offenses.

General Command of the Colombian Military Forces, January 24, 2022.¹²

Mid-March 2022

Puerto Carreño, Department of Vichada, Leticia, Department of Amazonas and Bogotá, Colombia

Arrest of 6 members of a gang specialized in the trade of ornamental fish and seizure of 20,000 fish from the Colombian Amazon, among which zebra plecos (*Hypancistrus zebra*, Appendix III and fishing prohibited in Brazil). The investigation of the Colombian police in cooperation with the Brazilian authorities identified the workings of the traffic. Fish are collected in Brazil, Venezuela and in the tributaries of the Amazon in Colombia and stored in Leticia and Puerto Carreño. They are then shipped to Bogotá. The fish stored in Puerto Carreño reach Puerto Gaitán by river and then Bogotá by road, well hidden in buses. Those stored in Leticia are flown to Bogotá in the holds of commercial airplanes. They are stored in the Colombian capital until they are exported to Europe, Asia or the United States of America. On average, 40% do not survive the trips to Bogotá, which means that an estimated 8,000 individuals died out of the 20,000 fish seized.

EL PACCTO, March 14, 2022.¹³

ECUADOR

January 13, 2022

Galapagos Province, Ecuador

The Environmental Police Unit (UPMA), in coordination with the Ecuadorian Navy, arrested 27 people suspected of illegal shark fishing. The officers recovered 58 pieces of suspected thresher sharks (*Alopias* spp., Appendix II), whose intentional capture is prohibited.

The next day, President Guillermo Lasso officially expanded the Galapagos Marine Reserve by 60,000 km².

El Comercio, January 14, 2022.¹⁴

PERU

February 2, 2022

Chimbote, Province of Santa, Department of Ancash, Peru

In March 2018, the truck leaving from Tumbes at the border with Ecuador and heading to Lima had been stopped in Chimbote. Inside, 51 bags containing 1,800 kg of shark fins (see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 13). Nearly 4 years later, 2 men involved in this traffic were sentenced to 4 and a half years in prison and 106,575 soles (27,700 US\$) in damages. According to the investigation, Jorge Roldan Angulo Sánchez, deputy director of the company Ajansa Perú S.A.C., sold shark fins without authorization to Poly Diks Pinto Gonzáles for 18,000 US\$. The targeted species were the pelagic thresher (*Alopias pelagicus*, Appendix II), the scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II), the smalltooth sand tiger (*Odontaspis ferox*) and the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II).

Info región, February 8, 2022; Public Prosecutor's Office of the Nation, February 9, 2022; InSight Crime, February 14, 2022.¹⁵

CENTRAL ASIA

KAZAKHSTAN

February 28, 2022

Fort Shevchenko, Mangystau Region, Kazakhstan

Sentence to 7 years in prison of a man who had "found" 219.3 kg of sturgeon (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) abandoned on the shore of the Caspian Sea on August 3, 2021. He had been caught transporting them to his home. Lada, March 2, 2022.¹⁶



EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

January 2022

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure in the cab of an "empty" truck of 9 totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders. Total weight: 2.9 kg. Chinese Customs, January 26, 2022.¹⁷

March 3, 2022

Hong Kong International Airport, China



Seizure of 1.2 kg of dried totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders in a parcel declared to contain "clothes and gifts" shipped from Mexico. Estimated value: 260,000 HK\$ (33,300 US\$). Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department, March 18, 2022.¹⁸

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

February 28, 2022

Camplong, Sampang Regency, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

Blast fishing has no season. 22 sailors are arrested for illegal fishing. Seizure of 2 fishing vessels.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), February 2022.¹⁹



MALAYSIA

January 11, 2022

Off Tanjung Wokong, Sabah State, Malaysia

Boarding of a fishing boat. The sailors were fishing with explosives. Seizure of the equipment, the hundred or so fish caught and the boat.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), January 2022.²⁰



PHILIPPINES

February 15, 2022

Sipangkot Island, Province of Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

The scourge of blast fishing is also affecting Philippine waters. Arrest of a fisherman and seizure of 50 homemade blasting caps and 195 kg of ammonium nitrate distributed in 8 bags. When he was not using them, the man was selling his homemade blasting caps to his fishing friends. Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), February 2022.²¹



March 2, 2022

Off the coast of Quezon Province, Philippines

A fisherman is arrested in the act of blast fishing and his boat is seized.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022.²²



March 9, 2022

Mariveles, Province of Bataan, Philippines

Arrest of 5 fishermen for blast fishing.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022.²³



VIET NAM

March 19, 2022

Tan Son Nhat International Airport, Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam



The goods had arrived at the airport from Mexico at the end of 2021. They had transited through the United States of America. The recipient, Thinh Phu Seafood Trading Co, did not come to pick them up. After 90 days, customs opened the package. Among the 689 kg of frozen fish that had been declared, there were 44.2 kg of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders.

Thoi bao Tai chinh Viet Nam, March 19, 2022.²⁴

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

January 26 and 28, 2022

Kulachal, Kanyakumari District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Once again, a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) accidentally fell victim to the nets of a fisherman. Instead of returning it to the water, Malbin preferred to drag it to the shore. There, no compassion. It became the local attraction, with children even climbing on it for a picture. The juvenile whale shark, weighing more than a tonne, was finally sold for 100,000 rupees (1,345 US\$) to who knows who. Malbin and 2 accomplices, Varghese and Mebison, were arrested.

ABP Nadu, January 27, 2022; The New Indian Express, January 29, 2022.²⁵



February 24, 2022

Mantripukhri, Imphal West District, State of Manipur, India

Destruction of 500 kg of dried shark fins and 27.5 kg of *Paris polyphylla* seeds, a medicinal plant classified as vulnerable in the IUCN red list, by fire on the grounds of the Forest Department. The seizure was made in September 2021.

The Sangai Express, February 24, 2022.²⁶

March 10, 2022

Malpe, Udupi District, State of Karnataka, India

The sawfish (Pristidae, Appendix I) about 3 meters long and 250 kg was allegedly accidentally trapped in the nets of the *Sea Captain*. The extremely rare specimen was auctioned off and bought by a Mangaluru trader before the authorities could intervene. The rostrum of a sawfish sells for a fortune.

Mangalore Today, March 11, 2022; The New Indian Express, March 11, 2022; Hindustan Times, March 12, 2022; The Times of India, March 13, 2022.²⁷



A species sighted off the Indian coast less than 10 times in 10 years

IRAN

February 1, 2022

Qarchak, Tehran Province, Iran

Seizure of 500 kg of shark meat. One arrest. Fine of 90 million rials (1,925 US\$). The meat was destroyed.

Tehran Provincial Government, February 1, 2022.²⁸



SRI LANKA

January 17 to 20, 2022

Mannar, Northern Province and Trincomalee, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka



Seizure of 2 water gel sticks (water-based explosive gels) hidden in bushes at Kothapiddi Beach and 9 more at Erakkandi Beach within 3 days. Sri Lanka Navy, January 21, 2021.²⁹

February 10, 2022

Beruwela Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Seven poachers back from fishing were arrested with 82 dried shark fins (940 grams) hidden in a locker in the wheelhouse. The seizure was handed over to the Fisheries inspectorate.

Sri Lanka Coast Guard, February 11, 2022.³⁰



February 16, 2022

Trincomalee, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

Return from fishing. Seizure of 8 shark fins (200 grams) and 6.5 kg of dried shark hidden on the roof of the boat. The 6 fishermen were arrested and the seizure handed over to the Assistant Director of Fisheries for further proceedings.

Sri Lanka Coast Guard, February 16, 2022.³¹

February 25, 2022

Beruwela Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Return from fishing. Arrest of 5 fishermen in possession of 65 dried shark fins (about 750 grams) hidden on the roof of the trawler.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), February 2022; Sri Lanka Coast Guard, February 27, 2022.³²

March 13, 2022

Beruwela Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Return from fishing. Arrest of 7 fishermen in possession of 11 dried shark fins (about 390 grams) hidden on the roof of the trawler.

Sri Lanka Coast Guard, March 15, 2022.³³

March 16, 2022

Dikovita Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Eight fishermen were arrested in possession of 27 whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*, Appendix II) weighing 818 kg, 4 silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II) with fins removed (172 kg), 16 shark fins (4.1 kg) and dried shark fins (7 kg). The poachers were arrested and the seizure handed over to the Fisheries Inspectorate for further proceedings.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022; Sri Lanka Coast Guard, March 18, 2022.³⁴

March 21, 2022

Negombo Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure of 42 shark fins (about 2 kg) and 5 kg of dried fins mixed with other products on board a trawler. Six poachers were arrested and the haul handed over to the Fisheries Inspectorate.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022; Sri Lanka Coast Guard, March 23, 2022.³⁵

March 21, 2022

Trinquemalee, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka



Interception of a motorcycle carrying 20 water gel sticks and 25 detonators used for blast fishing. The driver was arrested.

Sri Lanka Navy, March 22, 2022.³⁶



March 22, 2022

Dikovita Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Arrest of 13 fishermen back from 2 days at sea. Seizure on board the *FV Lakrajini 2* of 37 kg of shark fins and on board the *FV Marian 2* of 31 kg of shark fins plus 20 dried shark fins (about 1.4 kg).

Sri Lanka Coast Guard, March 23, 2022.³⁷

March 31, 2022

Dikovita Harbour, Western Province, Sri Lanka

A fishing boat is boarded with 6 poachers on board in possession of 44.6 kg of dried shark fins plus 16 shark fins (2.5 kg). Arrests and seizure.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), March 2022; Sri Lanka Coast Guard, April 2, 2022.³⁸

WESTERN ASIA

GEORGIA

February 11, 2022

Gomi, Region of Imereti, Georgia

Arrest of a man caught in red-handed while fishing with electricity. Seizure of his equipment and catch.

Department of Environmental Supervision, February 11, 2022.³⁹



NORTHERN EUROPE

SWEDEN

March 26 and 31, 2022

Port of Lysekil, Västra Götaland County, Sweden

The Coast Guard is opening an investigation for violation of the Species Protection Ordinance after biology students found about 60 spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) and rays, protected species, dead or dying in the harbor waters. The port will be closed on May 31 for a thorough inspection. On condition of anonymity, fishermen say that they frequently discard at sea sharks that have been caught accidentally.

Sveriges Television, March 30, 2022.⁴⁰



WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

January 3, 2022

La Rochelle, Department of Charente-Maritime, France

Eric Renaud, director of the "Organisation de Producteurs de Poissons de l'île d'Oléron", was arrested on Saturday, October 17, 2020, in possession of 42.7 kg of bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in nets (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.211). He did not have a permit to fish for them and, moreover, it is prohibited to cut up a tuna at sea. Eric Renaud defended himself by saying that he knew the rules of professional fishing, but not those of recreational fishing. The court found his explanation unsatisfactory and sentenced him to a fine of 4,000 € (4,530 US\$) and the confiscation of his inflatable boat and fishing equipment. Le Parisien, January 9, 2022.⁴¹



End of January 2022

Eaucourt-sur-Somme, Department of Somme, France



A court "cluttered because of 2 eels" (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), minimized the prosecutor, who had nevertheless requested a 300 € (340 US\$) fine against the chef of the restaurant Le Saltimbanque. Result: release for Sebastien Porquet, who had cooked in July 2020 these eels for the cameras of France 3 Picardie. The French Biodiversity Agency also accused him of not being able to justify their origin. The cook, who says he is "in love with nature," affirmed that they had been given to him for the occasion by 2 fishermen. Courrier picard, February 1, 2022.⁴²

February 1, 2022

Departments of Vendée and Loire-Atlantique, France

The maritime and environmental authorities, the gendarmerie and the customs authorities are at work tonight for an operation to combat the poaching of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) coordinated by Europol and the Interregional Directorate for the North Atlantic Sea-Western Channel. Controls are carried out one after another in the ports of Loire-Atlantique, Vendée, Morbihan, Ille-et-Vilaine and Finistère. Out of about 50 professional fishermen, 6 were fined in the Vendée for having caught 50 kg of glass eels, which were immediately released, without fishing documents and 4 fishermen were arrested for illegal fishing in the Loire-Atlantique.

France Bleu Loire Océan, February 3, 2022; Ouest-France, February 3, 2022.⁴³

February 18 and 19, 2022

Fresnay-l'Évêque, Department of Eure-et-Loir, France

It is 11:30 p.m. The driver of an Opel Movano decides to take a short break at a rest area. He chose the wrong moment. A few minutes later, customs officers approached him to check his cargo. It is difficult to hide 52 polystyrene boxes full of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) more than 200 kg in all. They are estimated to be worth 40,000 € (44,550 US\$ or 220 US\$/kg). The driver, aged 57 and living in Vendée, is remanded in custody. A suspected accomplice, aged 54 and living in Charente-Maritime, is remanded in custody the next day.

L'Echo Républicain, February 22, 2022.⁴⁴

March 3, 2022

Nantes, Department of Loire-Atlantique, France

At 4 a.m., police officers and French Biodiversity Agency agents spot several individuals fishing for glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) with a sieve in the Saint-Félix canal. They manage to arrest one of them. The 2 vehicles on site and all the fishing equipment are confiscated.

Since the beginning of the glass eel fishing season on December 1, 23 poachers have been arrested in Nantes and its immediate surroundings, a figure higher than the 2 previous years.

Ouest-France, March 3, 2022.⁴⁵

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Rennes, Department of Ille-et-Vilaine, France



"On the Trail" n°23 p.16 reported the dismantling of a gang of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) traffickers from the Loire estuary to the Spanish Basque country. In February 2019, the 9 men, including fishermen and fishmongers, had been sentenced to prison terms of one to 2 years, fined between 5,000 € and 30,000 € (5,715 to 34,290 US\$), and ordered to pay professional fishing organizations and environmental associations 230,000 € (262,870 US\$) as compensation for moral damages. Eight of them were also banned from fishing for 5 years.

The Court of Appeal of Rennes has just confirmed their sentences. They have appealed to the Supreme Court.

Le Pêcheur Professionnel, March 16, 2022; ASPAS, summer 2022.⁴⁶

REPEATED OFFENSE / FAMILY AFFAIRS March 11, 2022

Amiens, Department of Somme, France



- A 60 year-old fisherman with 6 fishing offenses on his criminal record was fined 1,000 € (1,120 US\$), ordered to pay damages of 283 € (315 US\$) and banned from fishing for one month. He had attempted to sell 47 kg of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) under his brother's name in order not to exceed his personal quota. In addition, on March 5, 2021, he said during a control that he had caught 2 kg of glass eels when he had 2.47 kg.

- A 44-year-old fisherman was fined 500 € (560 US\$). He had tried to catch glass eels 28 meters from the Saint-Valery-sur-Somme lock, whereas fishing is only authorized from 50 meters.

- The last defendant was also sentenced to a fine of 500 €. He had been arrested on March 5, 2021 in possession of 7 kg of glass eels (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.288). In addition, the previous year he had caught 10 kg of glass eels but had declared 5 kg in the name of his daughter.

Courrier picard, March 11, 2022.⁴⁷

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

End of January 2022

Algeciras, Province of Cádiz, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain



Sentence of a trafficker of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) to a fine of 7.2 million € (8.16 million US\$). He did not appear at the trial. The man had been arrested on December 29, 2017, at the port of Tarifa with 65 kg of glass eels, or more than 200,000 glass eels, in his suitcases. Only 2 kg were still alive. He was planning to leave for Morocco. This arrest had allowed the authorities

to dismantle in March 2018 a network composed of 10 Chinese, Spanish and Moroccan nationals who had smuggled more than 5 tonnes of glass eels from Algeciras to Asia via Morocco since at least 2016 (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.11 for all the details). Europa Sur, January 30, 2022.⁴⁸



Mid-February 2022

Muriedas, Autonomous Community of Cantabria, Spain

The 4 men, 2 glass eel poachers (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) and 2 shellfish collectors/sellers from Muriedas and Santander, were caught in the middle of a transaction in a garage. The agents of the Seprona (Servicio de Protección de la Naturaleza) had been watching them since December. The shellfish sellers are suspected of selling glass eels along with the shellfish.

Cadena SER, February 15, 2022.⁴⁹

ITALY

January 20, 2022

Scurcola Marsicana, Province of L'Aquila, Region of Abruzzo, Italy

A 50-year-old man of foreign origin is indicted for the illegal possession of an Asian arawona (*Scleropages formosus*, Appendix I) in his store. The fish remains in the care of its owner until an authorized and suitable aquarium is found to rehouse it.

An Asian arawona could sell for up to 300,000 € (340,000 US\$). In Eastern Asia, they are regarded as lucky charms.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, January 20, 2022.⁵⁰

End of January 2022

Viareggio, Province of Lucca, Region of Tuscany, Italy

Thanks to the intervention of the port agents, the numerous glass eel (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) traps already placed in the water or sometimes still in the hands of fishermen, were seized. Only a few glass eels had been caught. They were released.

Versiliatoday.it, February 2, 2022.⁵¹

MALTA

January 2021 and January 2022 Qormi, Southern Region, Malta

Twenty carcasses of juvenile shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*, Appendix II), whose heads and fins had been cut off, were discovered in a fish market warehouse. These protected sharks are prohibited from being fished in Maltese waters and cannot be sold for consumption. The fishmonger was irregularly importing them from Spain and selling them to local clients under the name of swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*). The environmental protection unit of the police led the charge. The importer Charlo Pisani, of Pisani Fisheries, was fined 10,000 € (11,300 US\$).

Times of Malta, January 17, 2022.⁵²



MONTENEGRO

February 10, 2022

Lake Skadar, Montenegro. Border with Albania.

Arrest of D.S., aged 28, and S.S., aged 39, while they were practicing electrofishing from their boat. 15 kg of fish were confiscated. S.S., the captain, did not have his papers, and the engine exceeded the maximum power allowed.

Dan, February 11, 2022.⁵³



EASTERN EUROPE

ROMANIA

February 9, 2022

Bordusani, Ialomița County, Romania

Seizure of one kilo of sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II), 18 kg of frozen fish, 320 kg of corn kernels, 3 stolen boat motors, one boat, fishing gear, and 6,800 meters of nets during 2 searches. Two arrests.

Independent, February 10, 2022.⁵⁴

March 1, 2022

Râmnicu Vâlcea, Vâlcea County, Romania

Interception of a truck carrying 4 tonnes of poached fish, including Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II), carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), Danube catfish (*Silurus glanis*), pikeperch (*Sander lucioperca*), golden grey mullet (*Chelon auratus*), bream (*Abramis brama*), and barbel (*Barbus barbus*). The driver and passenger, from Ionești (30 km away), were indicted, and the cargo, estimated to be worth 100,000 lei (22,700 US\$), was seized.

Adevarul, March 2, 2022.⁵⁵

RUSSIA

January and April 29, 2022

Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District and Labytnangi, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, Russia

In January, while the Ob was frozen, a resident of the village of Katravozh managed to catch a Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II). He was fined 10,000 rubles (115 US\$) for ecological damage.

New Day, April 29, 2022.⁵⁶



January 11, 2022

Azovsky District, Rostov Oblast, Russia

Why go poaching in the cold when you can help yourself to a sturgeon farm right next door? That's probably what a 24-year-old man thought, especially since he already had a little experience in breaking and entering. He snuck off with a live sturgeon (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) valued at 200,000 rubles (2,670 US\$), which he managed to sell before being identified by the authorities from CCTV footage. He is now under house arrest.

City Reporter, January 11, 2022.⁵⁷

January 11, 2022

Mozdoksky District, Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, Russia

An arrest for electrofishing. Seizure of 55 fish including barbel (genus *Barbus*) and common nase (*Chondrostoma nasus*), a net with electric wires, a battery, a power converter and the boat. Fishcom. Fishing Compass, January 20, 2022.⁵⁸



January 14, 2022

Feodosia, Republic of Crimea

The 44-year-old man claimed to have "found" a bag with 2 Russian sturgeons (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II) and a beluga (*Huso huso*, Appendix II) in Feodosia Bay on August 5, 2021. Searched by FSB agents on his way back, he could not hide his loot. He has just been sentenced to a one-year suspended prison term.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, January 14, 2022; Moskovski Komsomolets Crimea, January 15, 2022.⁵⁹



REPEATED OFFENSE

January 19, 2022

Atchinsk, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia

Already convicted in the spring of 2021 for poaching a Eurasian elk (*Alces alces*), Sergei Sudakov was this time punished for poaching 3 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) from June to August 2020 in the Chulyim, a tributary of the Ob River. The brother of the former head of the supervisory committee on the fisheries did not appeal. To show his good faith, he participated in work at a sturgeon farm, made 2 donations of 5,000 rubles (65 US\$) and 10,000 rubles (130 US\$) to children's homes, made a public apology in the media, and repaid ecological damage estimated at 480,000 rubles (6,410 US\$). He was sentenced to 200 hours of compulsory labor.

Our Krasnoyarsk Territory, November 3, 2021; Zapad24, November 3, 2021 and January 19, 2022.⁶⁰



January 20, 2022

Syzran, Samara Oblast, Russia

The trader had sold 250 grams of Amur sturgeon caviar (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) for 15,000 rubles (200 US\$ or 800 US\$/kg). When paying, the customer turned out to be an FSB agent. The woman promptly admitted to having bought 4 kg of Amur sturgeon and Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) caviar from poachers. In total, 13 jars were confiscated. Taking into account her goodwill and the fact that she has a young child, the court sentenced her to a one-year suspended prison term.

KTV-LUCH, January 20, 2022.⁶¹



January 31, 2022

Ordynskoye, Novosibirsk Oblast, Russia

Sentence of Mikhail Zelentsov to one year of compulsory labor, 6 months of which were suspended, with a 5 percent deduction of his income for the benefit of the State and payment of more than 320,000 rubles (4,270 US\$) for ecological damage. He had caught a Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baeri*, Appendix II) in the spring of 2021 in the Novosibirsk reservoir, an artificial lake where all fishing is prohibited between April 25 and June 10. Searched on his way back, he had no choice but to reveal his catch, which barely fit in the trunk.

Precedent TV, February 3, 2022; VN.ru, February 3, 2022.⁶²



End of January 2022

Khanty-Mansiysk, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia

Indictment of Vartovsky, a resident of Nizhnevartovsk, accused of poaching a Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in July 2021 in the Vakh River, a tributary of the Ob. Although he paid back the damage voluntarily, journalists remind that he faces 4 years in prison "for catching a single fish."

Muksun.fm, January 28, 2022; Ugrapro, January 28, 2022.⁶³

February 10, 2022

Nadym, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, Russia

Indictment of 2 residents for the commercial acquisition of 2 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in February 2021.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, February 10, 2022; YamalPro, February 10, 2022.⁶⁴

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 14, 2022

Srednyaya Akhtuba, Volgograd Oblast, Russia



In April 2019, a joint operation by the Oblast police and FSB had resulted in the arrest of 28 sturgeon (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) poachers or caviar sellers and the seizure of 120 liters of caviar (about 130 kilograms), and 47.5 million rubles (39,000 € or 17,000 US\$) in cash in Volgograd and Moscow oblasts (500 km apart) and in the city of Moscow. The caviar, from sturgeon poached in Volgograd Oblast, was delivered to dealers in Moscow Oblast and the Federal City of Moscow, or sold to individuals in Volgograd Oblast. It was packaged in jars with counterfeit lids and labels. One liter of black caviar was sold for 35,000-45,000 US\$ (540-690 US\$ and 585-745 US\$/kg based on 1.08 kilograms per liter).

On February 14, 2022, 6 members of the gang were on trial. Five of them received sentences ranging from 2.5 to 5 years in prison. They must also jointly pay 7.55 million rubles (97,000 US\$) for ecological damages. The last one is sentenced to one year of compulsory labor with a 5 percent deduction of his salary for the benefit of the State.

Izvestia, April 29, 2019; City News, February 14, 2022; iToday.ru, February 14, 2022.⁶⁵

February 17, 2022

Sofiysk, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

Indictment of 3 caviar poachers-traffickers. Between May and June 2019, 2 men from Ulchsky and Khabarovsk districts poached Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) and Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) in the Amur. They kept some of the meat for themselves and brought the eggs to a resident of Sofiysk who made caviar from them. In total, they obtained 172 kg of caviar packed in 0.5 liter jars. They had time to sell 68 kg of it in Khabarovsk before they were spotted by the authorities.

AmurMedia, February 17, 2022; TASS Russian News Agency, February 17, 2022.⁶⁶

February 22, 2022

Derbent, Republic of Dagestan, Russia

Sentence of M.-T. to one year of compulsory labor with a 20 percent deduction of his salary for the benefit of the State. The sentence was suspended on probation. M.-T. was caught with Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II) and starry sturgeon (*Acipenser stellatus*, Appendix II) during a road check.

Nur, February 22, 2022.⁶⁷



February 24, 2022

Nikolayevsk-on-Amur, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

A resident of Nizhnee Pronge had bought 80 Huso sturgeons (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) in December 2019. He intended to resell them at a good price, but his shed was searched by the authorities. He was sentenced to 6 months of compulsory labor with a 5 percent salary deduction for the benefit of the State, with a probationary suspension.

Fishnews, February 24, 2022.⁶⁸



Early March 2022

Nikolayevsk-on-Amur, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

Sentence to 5 years of probation for 2 poachers of Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) and payment of damages of 903,000 rubles (8,770 US\$). They had been caught transporting caviar made with sturgeon poached from the Amur River.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 4, 2022.⁶⁹



Early March 2022

Astrakhan, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia

A former police officer is sentenced to one year in prison for obstructing the prosecution of a friend arrested for trafficking sturgeon (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II). He is not allowed to hold public office for 2 years.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 13, 2022.⁷⁰



March 1, 2022

Surgut, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia

Two men had caught 60 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II), 2 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II), 74 ideo (*Leuciscus idus*) and one bream (*Abramis brama*) in the Tromyagan, a tributary of the Ob, in May 2021 (see "On the Trail" n°33 p.270). One of them has just been sentenced to 5 years and 3 months of suspended imprisonment with a probation of 3 years. The other is awaiting trial.

Fishnews, March 1, 2022; Bulletin of the Surgut Region, April 1, 2022.⁷¹



Mid-March 2022

Blagoveshchensk, Amur Oblast, Russia. Border with China.

A trader who sold sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) illegally was fined 12,000 rubles (115 US\$). The court considered his donation of 15,000 rubles (145 US\$) to WWF to be sufficient proof of goodwill not to initiate criminal proceedings.

Amourskaya Pravda, March 15, 2022.⁷²



March 22, 2022

Surgut, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia

They had caught 5 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II) in the Ob in May 2019. The 2 men will not see their boat or motor again, and must pay a fine of 1.15 million rubles (11,170 US\$).

SurgutInformTV, March 22, 2022.⁷³



March 25, 2022

Khabarovsk, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

A 34-year-old man bought 8 kg of Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) caviar at the Khabarovsk market in the fall of 2020. He was indicted and thought he would appease the judges by donating 3,000 rubles (30 US\$) to the Environmental Defense Fund. This was only a postponement. The district court relented, but after the prosecutor's appeal, the regional court overturned "this illegal and unreasonable decision."

Sentencing to follow.

DV-ROSS - Far East News, March 25, 2022.⁷⁴



March 28, 2022

Smirnykh, Sakhalin Oblast, Russia

The chief physician of the central district hospital was fined 10,000 rubles (95 US\$). Valery Sharykin was arrested in October 2021 with 0.5 liters (0.54 kg) of sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) and 10 fillets of Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) (25.6 kg) in his company car. The case created a lot of noise (see "On the Trail" n°34 p.256). The court was lenient, considering that by donating the caviar and fish to a social rehabilitation center for minors, Sharykin had compensated for the damage caused by his actions.

ASTV.RU, March 28, 2022; Sakhalin.info, March 28, 2022.⁷⁵

March 30, 2022

Kizlyar, Republic of Dagestan, Russia

Indictment of a woman accused of buying Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) and starry sturgeon (*Acipenser stellatus*, Appendix II) caviar for commercial purposes in January 2021. Police officers acting as buyers had tricked her into buying caviar for 36,000 rubles (480 US\$). The ecological damage is estimated to be worth 320,000 rubles (4,280 US\$). Pending trial, her car and personal belongings have been seized.

Dagestankaya Pravda, March 30, 2022.⁷⁶

March 31, 2022

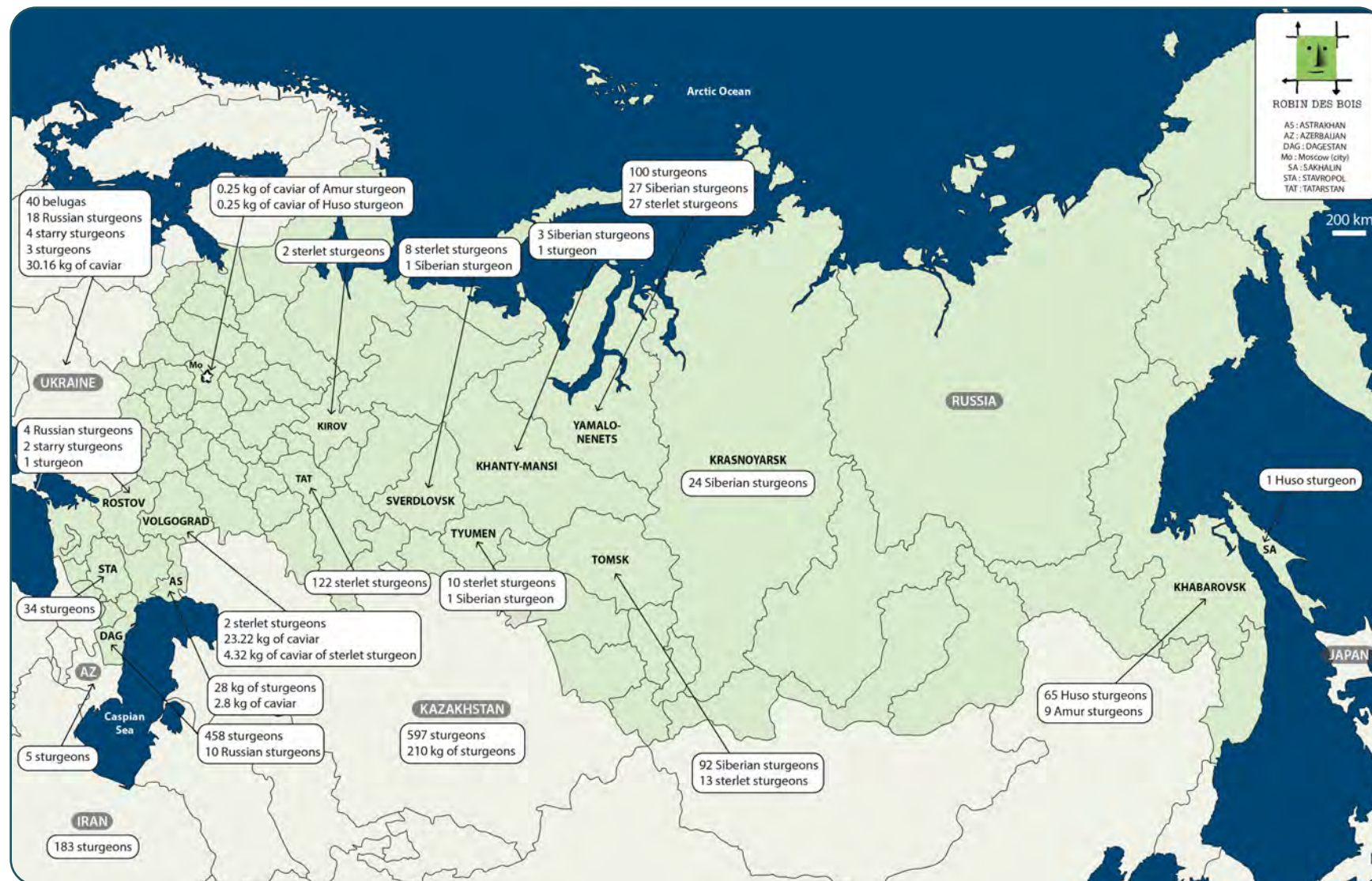
Khabarovsk, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

Sentence of a 32-year-old man to a suspended prison term of 8 months for the purchase of 130 kg of Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) in January 2021. He intended to resell them at a good price.

AmurMedia, March 31, 2022.⁷⁷



1,867 sturgeons and 238 kg of sturgeons seized or poached and 61 kg of caviar seized in Azerbaijan, in Kazakhstan, in Iran and in Russia between January 1 and March 31, 2022, according to official and media sources



Sturgeon, unidentified species (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II)

Beluga (*Huso huso*, Appendix II)

Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II)

Starry sturgeon (*Acipenser stellatus*, Appendix II)

Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II)

Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II)

Sterlet sturgeon (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II)

Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II)

The litres of caviar have been converted into kilos on the basis of 1.08 kg for 1 litre.

1istochnik ; Actual Today ; Argoumenty i Fakty (AIF) ; BezFormata ; Bulletin of the Surgut Region ; Caliber.az ; City News ; City Reporter ; Depo ; Don-TR ; Dumskaya ; Enisey TV ; FederalPress ; GTRK Lotos ; GTRK Tomsk ; inAktau ; Iranian Students' News Agency ; Kherson News ; KHERSON Online ; Kommersant ; Komsomolskaia Pravda ; Lada ; Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia ; Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan ; MTV.online ; New Day ; Newslab ; Newtimes.kz ; Northern City ; Azov Fisheries Patrol ; Punkt-A ; Region Kiev Media ; REN TV ; RuFox ; Ural Meridian ; Sakhalin.info ; SerovGlobus.ru ; SIA-Press ; SurgutInformTV ; TASS Russian News Agency ; Tatar-inform ; This is Caucasus ; TSN ; Tumba.kz ; Tumen Today ; UNIAN ; Vesti ; Vesti Yamal ; Vgorode.ua ; Volga-Media ; Yamal-Media ; YamalPro.



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February 7, 2022. Nadymsky District, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, Russia



© КНБ РК

January 2022. Magystau Region, Kazakhstan



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January 24, 2022. Molchanovsky District, Tomsk Oblast, Russia



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February 21, 2022. Ikryaninsky District, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia



© пресс-служба регионального полиции



© ГУ МВД по Волгоградской области

February 28, 2022. Svetloyarsky District, Volgograd Oblast, Russia



© ГУ МВД по Волгоградской области

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)

February 27, 2022

Bandré, Department of Mayotte, France

Two sea turtles killed. The poachers managed to reach land and lose the 3 police officers and 5 gendarmes who were chasing them in the Mnyambani slum. Their pirogue and the 70 kilos of meat found inside were destroyed on the instructions of the prosecutor's office. Mayotte la 1^{ère}, February 28, 2022.¹



March 3, 2022

Mamoudzou, Department of Mayotte, France

Capture, transport and destruction of green turtle. El Anrif Said Salim, Touha Attoumane and Farid Aboubacar were sentenced on appeal to 24, 18 and 15 months' imprisonment respectively, and ordered to pay a fine of 1,000 € (1,120 US\$) each and 3,000 € (3,360 US\$) in damages to the ASPAS. ASPAS, Summer 2022.²



MADAGASCAR

January 6, 2022

Ambaja, Bobaomby and Ankarongana, Diana Region, Madagascar

The consumption of a product of poaching has costed the life of an 8-year-old girl. About 40 adults are also hospitalized with food poisoning after eating the flesh of a sea turtle contaminated with chelonitoxin caught by a fisherman in his seventies. Réunion la 1^{ère}, January 12, 2022.³

February 13, 2022

Morondova, Menabe Region, Madagascar

A sea turtle weighing around 150 kg was narrowly saved and released back into the water that evening. The poachers are said to have fled as residents approached.

Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy, February 14, 2022; Linfo.re, February 16, 2022.⁴

MAURITIUS

March 19, 2022

Between Anse-Goéland and Pointe-Diable, Autonomous Region of Rodrigues, Mauritius

A hawksbill turtle was found with 2 gaping holes in its shell and signs of beating on its head. It was harpooned and hit by octopus or cuttlefish fishermen, managed to escape and later died from its injuries.

L'Express, March 28, 2022.⁵

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

January 11, 2022

Cajambre, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Release of a loggerhead turtle by the group "Guardians of the Mangrove." The NGO, which contributes in particular to reforestation, took the opportunity to encourage the fishermen of the villages to report and release the turtles in case of accidental capture.

Regional Autonomous Corporation of Valle del Cauca, January 11, 2022.⁶

FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

REPEATED OFFENSE

January 2022

Awala-Yalimapo, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France. Border with Suriname.

Surprised by a reserve warden, the nest raider fled, leaving the eggs behind. He was identified, his home was searched by the police and the poacher subsequently reported to the police station. The repeat offender was taken into custody. The 98 green turtle eggs were returned to a nest, with no certainty that they would hatch.

French Biodiversity Agency, April 2022.⁷

MEXICO

February 1, 2022

Between Arriaga, State of Chiapas, and San Pedro Tapanatepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

Seizure in 2 occasions, on 2 passenger buses, of 3,815 sea turtle eggs.

El Heraldo de Chiapas, February 1, 2022.⁸



SURINAME

February 7, 2022

Albina and Galibi, Marowijne District, Suriname

Arrest of a soldier transporting 2,400 green turtle eggs in the backseat of his car. He turned in his supplier, a villager from Galibi who is then arrested. His interrogation allowed the identification of another buyer who was quickly arrested. In his vehicle, 6,500 green turtle eggs were discovered in garbage bags. All the eggs are destined to be destroyed.

Waterkant, February 8, 2022.⁹

February 20, 2022

Braamspunt, Commewijne District, Suriname

The police decide to check almost all the fish markets in the city. The operation is not in vain: B.R., aged 38, J.N., aged 54, and K.A., aged 51, are arrested with 1,465 eggs of "krapé" or green turtle. The eggs were reportedly destroyed.

Waterkant, February 21, 2022.¹⁰

March 2, 2022

Nieuw Amsterdam, Commewijne District, Suriname

Arrest of Vishnu N., aged 41, Safrash M., aged 25, and Totaram P., aged 31, all 3 Guyanese, recently arrived by boat. Vishnu and Safrash were in possession of 3,015 green turtle eggs.

Waterkant, March 4, 2022.¹¹

March 4, 2022

Moengo, Marowijne District, Suriname

Arrest of Luck N., aged 20, Joanni A., aged 20, and Silvanio A., aged 33, during a road check. They were carrying 2,400 green turtle eggs in 6 large bags.

Waterkant, March 5, 2022.¹²

March 11, 2022

Marowijne District, Suriname

Seizure of 165 green turtle eggs on a boat sailing on the Maroni River at night. One arrest.

Ministry of Defense, March 13, 2022.¹³

ASIA

INDIA

February 5, 2022

Panjai and Chettikulam, Tirunelveli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Five decomposing green turtle carcasses were washed ashore. Each of these sub-adults, aged between 10 and 14 years, weighed approximately 30 kg. In the very heart of the nesting season, the 3 females and 2 males were either victims of boat propellers or poaching attempts. One of them had a hook in its throat. They were buried on the beaches where they may have been born and where their remains had washed up.

DT Next, February 6, 2022.¹⁴

February 20, 2022

Kasarkod Tonka, Uttara Kannada District, State of Karnataka, India

249 juvenile Ridley sea turtles seem to have vanished into thin air. Local residents and fishermen, unofficial guardians of the nests of a dozen turtles, that is to say 2,500 eggs, discovered with dismay this Sunday evening that the tracks of 250 juvenile Ridley sea turtles that came out of a nest stopped in the middle of the beach of Kasarkod Tonka. They did not reach the sea. Right next to them, there are the footprints of 2 people. When the forest officers arrive, they end up finding only one small turtle, which they put in the water. But according to them, there is no reason to worry: "Their footprints are so soft that they can be erased by wind or breeze."

Ganapati Tandel, president of the local fishermen's association, fears a malicious act. Despite opposition from locals and fishermen, a commercial port is being built at Honnavar under a partnership between the Karnataka government and Honnavar Port Private Ltd. An access road of 4 km long and 25-40 meters wide is to be built across the beach of Kasarkod Tonka in contravention of Section 3 of the Environment Protection Act. It is indeed a "No Development Zone" because of its importance to local fishermen and the presence of turtle nests. But the entrepreneurs would not hesitate to use illegal means to discourage the sea turtles' nesting attempts and thus minimize the ecological importance of the beach.

Vijay Karnataka, February 21, 2022; Deccan Herald, February 22, 2022; Mongabay, July 14, 2022.¹⁵

INDONESIA

Early January 2022

Province of South Sulawesi, Sulawesi Island, Indonesia

- Arrest of S., Z., B. and R. Seizure of 5 green turtles, one of them dead.
- Seizure of 93 kg of turtle meat in a restaurant in Makassar.

Merdeka.com, January 12, 2022.¹⁶

February 18, 2022

Pengambengan, Jembrana Regency, Bali Province, Lesser Sunda Islands Archipelago, Indonesia

Probably intended to be eaten in ritual ceremonies, 9 green turtles smuggled into Bali were seized and saved from an archaic sacrifice. A local fisherman, Sakrani (57), was arrested and the boat under which he had hidden the victims, one of which was probably 90 years old, was seized. The turtles, injured by their ties, were treated and marked before being released.

Bali Discovery, February 19, 2022; Coconuts, April 22, 2022.¹⁷



One male and 8 females, the largest measuring 130 cm and the smallest 44 cm

MALAYSIA

March 29 and April 4, 2022

Bangau-Bangau and Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia



Seizure on a boat of 25 green turtle marginal scales worth 3,500 ringgit (833 US\$) and 13 plastrons worth 3,000 ringgit (714 US\$). All the tools of the perfect poacher (a boat worth 2,000 ringgit (476 US\$), 2 engines worth 3,000 ringgit (714 US\$), a knife, an axe, a hammer and a protective mask) were seized. A Filipino illegal immigrant, Suryan Sah Mohd Edi (31) was sentenced to 4 years in prison and fined 200,000 ringgit (47,570 US\$). He will be deported when he has served his sentence.

Daily Express, March 31, 2022; New Straits Times, April 4, 2022.¹⁸

SRI LANKA

February 15, 2022

Thoduwawa, North Western Province, Sri Lanka

Two fishermen were arrested on Iranawila beach after returning from sea in possession of a live turtle. The poachers and the turtle were handed over to officers of the Anawilundawa Department of Wildlife Conservation for further proceedings.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), February 2022; Sri Lanka Coast Guard, February 16, 2022.¹⁹

MARINE AND FRESHWATER MAMMALS



Bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*). Photo Brock

AFRICA

NIGERIA

January 15, 2022

Epe, Lagos State, Nigeria

An African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*, Appendix I) had been held in captivity for a month while his captors sought buyers. The endangered mammal was recovered by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), an environmental agency of the federal government with the help of WildAid and researchers from the Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR). EnviroNews Nigeria, January 17, 2022.¹

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 26, 2022

Newark, State of New Jersey, United States of America

He had shipped 2 parcels containing carvings made of sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) teeth to a buyer in Etter, Pennsylvania against payment. Richard Gontarek (55) of Woodbridge, Middlesex County, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 5 years' probation, including 6 months' home confinement, and ordered to pay a fine of 2,800 US\$ to the US Fish and Wildlife Service Lacey Act Reward Fund. US Department of Justice, September 22, 2021 and January 26, 2022.²



March 24, 2022

Fort Myers, State of Florida, United States of America

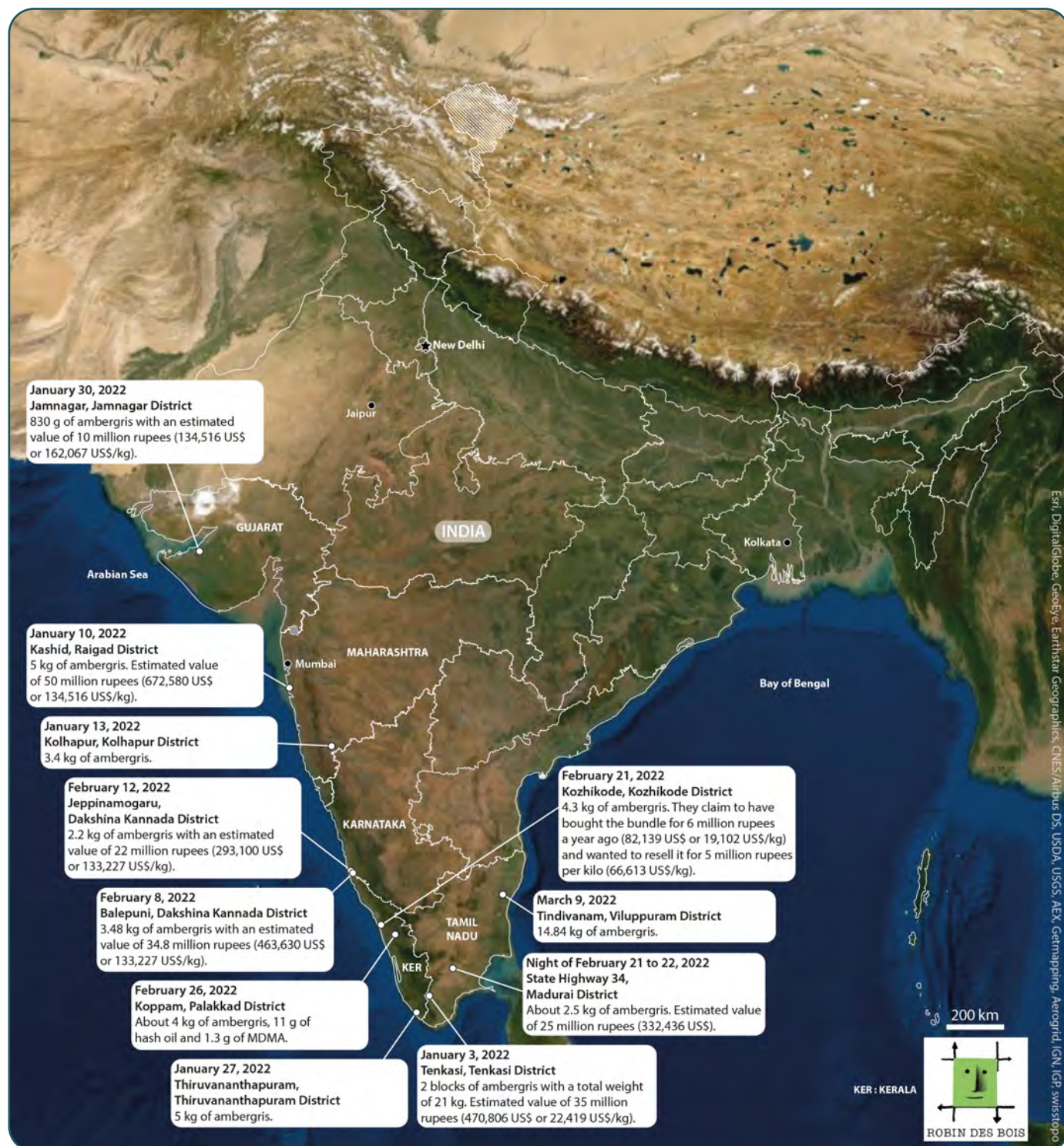
A bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*, Appendix II) was found dead on the beach. Necropsy showed that she had been pierced in the head with a throwing weapon. The lactating female was allegedly fatally injured while in a begging position, a behaviour associated with feeding that endangers both humans and wildlife. Since 2002, at least 27 dolphins have stranded in the Gulf of Mexico with evidence of gunshot, arrow or sharp object wounds.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, April 13, 2022.³



Feeding wild animals, not such a good idea that led to the death of this female and probably her young.

66.55 kg of alleged sperm whale seized in India between January 1 and March 31, 2022 according to official and media sources



Sources: ABP Nadu; Asianet News; Dainik Bhaskar; Deccan Herald; Mangalorean; Mathrubhumi; The Hindu; The Times of India.

BANGLADESH

January 2, 3 and 4, 2022

Savar, Dhaka District, Dhaka Division; Dhulihar Union Parishad, Satkhira District, Khulna Division, Bangladesh

The first one, weighing 120 kg, is a Ganges river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*, Appendix I). The second one is a presumed Gangetic river dolphin weighing 200 kg. They were found in the Turag River. The third is an Irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*, Appendix I) weighing 186 kg. He was found in the Betna River. The circumstances of their deaths are unknown. Capture in fishing gear or collisions with vessels are suspected.

In October 2021, the government promulgated the Dolphin Conservation Action Plan. Both species are threatened by extinction.

Dhaka Tribune, January 3 and 5, 2022.⁴

JAPAN

March 2022

Taiji, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan

LIA (Life Investigation Agency) led by Ren Yabuki and supported by some 50 activists mobilised from September 2021 to February 2022 has been meticulously inventorying all the dolphins who, after being harassed, deafened, panicked, separated from each other and driven into Taiji Cove by a relentless, experienced and paid fishing fleet, ended up in pens in Taiji Cove. Taiji is the Asian equivalent of the Faroe Islands in Europe, except that the dolphins are stockpiled awaiting primary training and sale to aquatic zoos. 269 dolphins were taken prisoner, 180 bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops* spp, Appendix II), 35 Risso's dolphins (*Grampus griseus*, Appendix II), 11 short-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*, Appendix II), 8 striped dolphins (*Stenella coeruleoalba*, Appendix II), 19 Pacific white-sided dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*, Appendix II), 3 melon-headed whales (*Peponocephala electra*, Appendix II), 3 rough-toothed dolphins (*Steno bredanensis*, Appendix II), 9 dolphins of the genus *Stenella* (Appendix II) and one false killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*, Appendix II). The unsold animals, mostly adults, are killed, butchered, canned, distributed to schools and prisons or sold in supermarkets and sometimes smuggled out in this form.

Dolphin Project, 22 mars 2022.⁵

KAZAKHSTAN

January 11, 2022

Tupkaragan District, Mangystau Region, Kazakhstan

Fishery officers found in a net the carcasses of 3 Caspian seals (*Pusa caspica*) and 51 sturgeons (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) (see map of sturgeon seizures and poaching p.210), weighing 179 kg in total.

inAktau, January 13, 2022; Lada, January 13, 2022.⁶



January to mid-March 2022

Mangystau Region, Kazakhstan

Maritime border guards saved the lives of 99 Caspian seals (*Pusa caspica*) trapped in nets during the first quarter. In the same period, they removed 79,500 meters of net. inAktau, March 16, 2022.⁷

TURKIYE

February 14, 2022

Mersin Province, Türkiye

Seizure of 43 kg of sperm whale ambergris (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) with an estimated value of 10 million liras (735,550 US\$ or 17,100 US\$/kg).

The NT News, February 16, 2022.⁸

EUROPE

IRELAND

February 16, 2022

Maghery and Malin Head, County Donegal, Ireland

After the stranding of 2 female sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) on the beaches, the lower jaw was cut off by thugs. The teeth will eventually end up on the black market.

At the end of January, the Ocean Research and Conservation Association of Ireland expressed concern about the Russian Navy's maneuvers 240 km southwest of the Irish coast. The IWDG (Irish Whale and Dolphin Group) also noted the stranding of a female Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*, Appendix II) and a female long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*, Appendix II) between February 15 and 21. According to the IWDG, the strandings of the 2 female sperm whales do not deviate from the expected annual stranding figures and does not suggest an unusual mortality event even though it is surprising. "Two female sperm whales washed up at the same time is unexpected as most stranded sperm whales in Ireland are mature males."

Independent.ie, February 18, 2022; The Irish News, February 26, 2022; Afloat, February 27, 2022.⁹

RUSSIA

Early February 2022

Orsk, Orenburg Oblast, Russia

Shutdown by order of the prosecutor's office of websites providing information on poaching methods and selling sale poaching accessories and carved ivories from sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) and walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada). Simultaneous shutdown of sites disseminating information on the manufacture of explosives that could be exploited by "extremist and terrorist factions."

Orengard, February 2, 2022.¹⁰

