

ROBIN DES BOIS

# ON<sub>the</sub> TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

n°3 / 1<sup>st</sup> October - 31<sup>th</sup> December 2013

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## Introduction

Welcome to the third world tour of endangered species embarked in the cruel limbo and maelstrom of international traffic.

Supposed to be aphrodisiacs, euphoria-inducing, lucky charms, good or bad omens, divinatory or miraculous, many animals are sacrificed on the universal altar of superstition, even vultures. The black flood of black magic brings in great amounts of money to those who exploit common naïvety and is taking a stronger role in international trafficking of animals and animal parts. In that sense, anti-superstition laws that are starting to be enacted in India despite violent and sometimes murderous reactions are, to the eyes of the « On the Trail » detectives, positive steps towards progress and the respect of human and animal rights.

### CITES\* Appendices

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

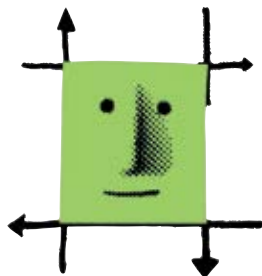
**Appendix II :** export permit required in order to avoid utilization incompatible with the species survival. Import permit if required by national law.

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

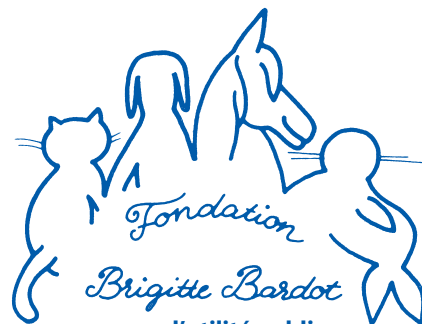
\* Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. 179 Member States.

# ON<sub>the</sub> TRAIL

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## Seahorses Sea

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



### ASIA

**Seizure of 93 seahorses**  
**Mankundu, State of West Bengal, India**  
**November 19, 2013**

The seahorses were destined for Sri Lanka where medicinal values are attributed to them. 142 mollusks from the nudibranchia order, *Glaucus atlanticus* or *Glaucus marginatus*, were equally part of the seizure. Their global commercial value is estimated at Rs 2 lakh (US\$ 3,209).



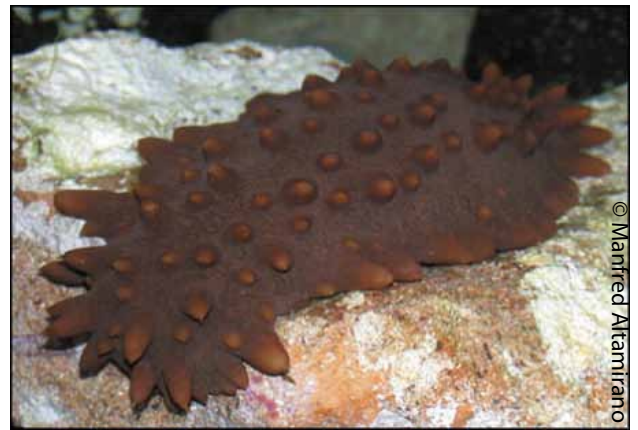
Below, *Glaucus atlanticus*, above, *Glaucus marginatus*

## Sea Cucumbers

### AMERICA

**Seizure of brown sea cucumbers (*Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)**  
**Puerto Grande, San Cristobal Island, Galapagos, Ecuador**  
**October 2013**

Members of the Direction of the Galapagos National Park counted the sea cucumbers one by one. Dried and salted, they were expected by Asian communities in Asia and North America. There were 32,477.



*Isostichopus fuscus*

## Queen Conches

### AMERICA

**Seizure of 9,000 kg of queen conches (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II)**  
**Caucedo Port, Province of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**  
**October 2013**

The queen conches were divided into 233 crates. They were to be exported towards China by the Día a Día Marisco Trading SRL company. Penalty for this offence is a fine than can reach 10 to 200 times the minimum salary in the public sector and/or a 2 to 10 years prison term. In the Dominican Republic, several legal instruments regulate queen conch fishing: the Constitution, the law 307-04 on fishing and aquaculture, law 64-00 on the environment and natural resources and Decree 499-09 that prohibits queen conch catches every year between the 1st of July and the 31st of October.



Caucedo Container port

**Seizure of 97 boxes and 12 bags of queen conches (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II)**  
**Santo Domingo, Province of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**  
**December 2013**

The sea products (26 tons) were in a different container: 97 boxes of queen conches, 12 bags of queen conches, 696 bags of fighting conches (*Strombus Pugilis*), 6 bags of shark fins and 4 bags of sea cucumbers. The cargo was supposed to be imported to Vietnam by the Ximda Trading Company, B&R Shipping and Trading Ltd was in charge of the expedition leaving Santo Domingo.



# Sharks

## OCEANIA

**The Captain of the *Hu Yu 911* sentenced to 4 months suspended prison term, a 5 million CFP francs fine (US\$ 56 893) and confiscation of his long liner and cargo.**

**Between Belep, Province North, New-Caledonia and Vanuatu**

**November 2013**

The *Hu Yu 911*, home port Shanghai, was hailed in New-Caledonia's Exclusive Economic Zone under French administration in the Pacific Ocean. The *Hu Yu 911* was undertaking fishing operations. The hulls contained 40 tons of yellow fin tuna, 7 sharks and 4 tons of shark fins. The Chinese captain was presented before the Noumea Court on November 20. He was sentenced to 4 months suspended prison term and a US\$ 57,000 fine. The Court did not follow his argument according to which 62 km long lines were not discriminate and it was not possible to prevent sharks from being attracted to the bait. Capture of all shark species is banned in the New Caledonian EEZ, that is to say 1,245,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

Inspection of the *Hu Yu 911* reignited the debate on the pillage of resources carried out by the Chinese fleet stationed in Vanuatu. The exact situation of the demarcation line between the Vanuatu EEZ and the Neo-Caledonian one, subject of controversy, was brought up on this occasion.

## Marine Mammals

### AMERICA

#### OPERATION LONGTOOTH

**Conviction of a man fined US\$ 385,000 for trafficking 250 narwhal tusks (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II)**

**St. Stephen, Province of New Brunswick, Canada**

**October 2013**

He made a total of US\$ 700,000 off the backs of narwhals, more precisely off narwhal tusks. Since 2003, he illegally exported and sold 250 tusks to 8 American clients in Maine and Hawaii. Gregory Logan used a trailer with a hidden compartment to tie tusks to the bottom and smuggle them across the border. The court of St. Stephen declared a US\$ 385,000 fine and 4 months of house arrest to the Canadian citizen who owns 2 houses, one in the Province of New Brunswick and the other in the Province of Alberta. His arrest took place thanks to the cooperation between the U.S. and Canadian services. Operation Longtooth, to date, failed to shed light on the complicity that allowed Logan to capture 250 narwhal tusks, marine mammals that only Inuit communities have the right to hunt to ensure their right to livelihood. The import of narwhal tusks is banned in the United States. The narwhal is

an endangered species. Only male narwhals have this 'tusk', a left outer tooth that can reach up to 3 meters in length. Gender-targeted hunting is just another issue that affects the future of species.



**Seizure of 1.4 kg of dolphin meat (family *Delphinidae*, Appendix I or II)**

**Chimbote, Region of Ancash, Peru**

**October 2013**

The meat was seized on the La Perla Market in Chimbote. The seller will be charged as stated by national law protecting dolphins and other marine mammals. This is law n°26585 from 1996 prohibiting capture and sale.

The Chimbote fishing port is specialized in fish meal. The port was recently set under the direction of the Regional Ancash Government who projects to have it modernized and become the main port for national and Brazilian exports. The first stage of this project already requires US\$ 88 million investment out of an estimated total of US\$ 300 million.



**Seizure of 1.5 kg of dried dolphin meat (family *Delphinidae*, Appendix I or II)**

**Callao, Region of Lima, Peru**

**October 2013**

Dolphin is in style in Peru 1.5 kg of dried dolphin meat had been seized in the restaurant El Colono in Callao. According to the Mundo Azul NGO, 15,000 dolphins are illegally caught each year off Peru. They can then be found on market stalls but dolphin meat and fat is also used as bait for shark fishing.



El Colorao restaurant, Callao



Dried dolphin meat

## ASIA

### **Seizure of a dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Appendix I) Periapattinam, State of Tamil Nadu, India December 10, 2013**

The dugong is listed in Appendix I of CITES since 2000, which forbids to export individuals live or chopped to pieces. This one who's 3 pieces were being carried by rickshaw had been caught in the Mannar gulf.

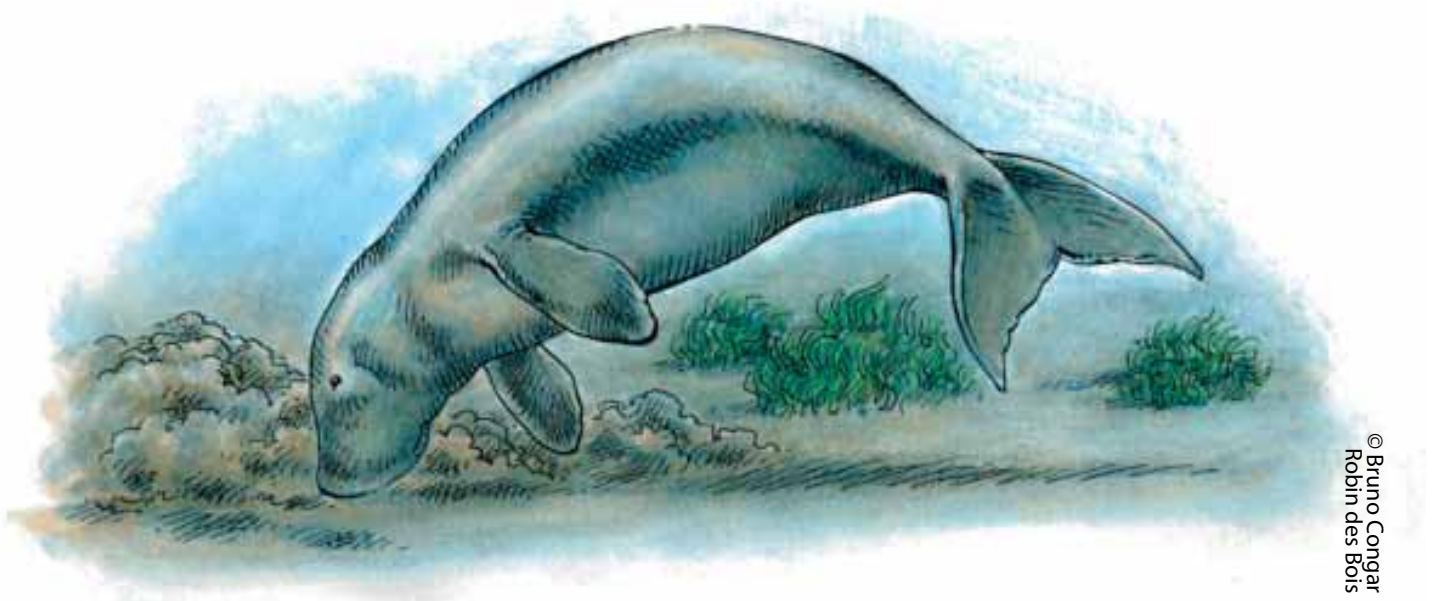
The peaceful sea-water herbivore is victim of the destruction of sea-floor algae by trawling and so-called by catches. Dugong meat is sold for Rs 600 per kilogram (US\$/kg 10). Complete nonsense tails say the meat has aphrodisiac and youth properties.

## EUROPE

### **Investigations opened following the sale of dolphin meat (family *Delphinidae*, Appendix II) Rome and Civitavecchia, Italy December 2013**

So it was no joke. Rumors have been going around for several years. Dolphin meat would be sold in fine slices for a little less than € 1,000. Several restaurants serve it with onions, tomatoes and celery for €100 a dish. The team of journalists from channel Uno filmed it all. Fishermen talk of dolphins who are caught unintentionally in the nets. Others say the nets are thrown on purpose into waters where dolphins have been spotted.

It is forbidden to sell dolphin meat in Italy as in all of Europe. When there is dolphin bycatches, the fishermen chop the heads, cut up the animal and claim them to be sharks. It fools the Italian coastal guards with no difficulty.



Dugong



# Marines Turtles

**Total seizure from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>th</sup> December**

**397 marines turtles  
42,006 marines turtles eggs**

## AMERICA

### **Seizure of olive Ridley turtle meat and 84 eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I) Santa María Tonameca, State Oaxaca, Mexico October 2013**

2 women were arrested in possession of the illegal goods. The Federal Penal Code states a 1 to 9 year prison sentence and a fine reaching from 300 to 3000 times minimum daily wage for those who harm or kill, collect, stock or sell turtle products and by products. In addition, a 3 year sentence and a fine reaching up to 1000 times the minimum daily wage can be pronounced if proven that the meat or eggs come from a protected natural area or that such site was damaged.

### **Seizure of 24 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I) Cosoleacaque, State of Veracruz, Mexico October 2013**

The PROFEPA received an anonymous call: turtle eggs would supposedly be sold on the Cosoleacaque market. Inspectors went to the premises and confiscated the goods.

### **Seizure of 90 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I) Santa María Tonameca, State of Oaxaca, Mexico October 2013**

A 21-year-old was caught red handed stealing olive Ridley turtle eggs on Ventanilla beach. The arrest took place as the beach was subject to high level surveillance from the general attorney's services and State police. Monitoring is set up in the main nesting areas. In fact, in October on Ecobilla beach, this surveillance was rewarded with the hatching and birth of olive Ridley turtles.



### **Seizure of 5,600 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)**

**Santa María del Mar, State of Oaxaca, Mexico  
October 2013**

4 people 36 to 56 years old were caught red handed. In all, PROFEPA seized 26,000 olive Ridley turtle eggs during the month of October. This is the record for the year. Surveillance operations on the beaches have been reinforced. Specific actions are planned for the imminent arrival of leatherback turtles on the beaches (*Dermochelys coriacea*, Appendix I).

### **Seizure of a live green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) Idaho Aquarium, State of l'Idaho, United States December 17, 2013**

The director of the aquarium and Chief executive of the board were sentenced by a local Court respectively to 1 year and 1 day and to 4 months prison term along with a 2 years suspension of working for any institution harboring wildlife or even getting near one. They were found guilty of bying for US\$ 6,500 4 spotted eagle rays (*Aetobatus narinari*) and 2 lemon sharks (*Negaprion brevirostris*) caught in the high seas with no permit. The aquarium remains liable of other fines that could be pronounced by Federal Court and a marine turtle was taken from the establishment by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.



### **Seizure of 292 olive Ridley sea turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I) Lagunas de Chacahua National Park, State of Oaxaca, Mexico December 2013**

A young man age 23 was arrested, caught red handed while stealing olive Ridley sea turtle eggs on Chacahua beach, classified a Protected Natural Area. He was immediately presented to the Federal General Attorney. On the unguarded beaches, up to 100% of the eggs are sometimes taken. The Lagunas de Chacahua National Park was founded in 1937.



**Seizure of 170 rings and bracelets made of hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)**

**Los Angeles de Heredia, Heredia, Costa Rica  
December 2013**

The jewellery was seized from 5 stands of a Christmas market. The organisers were confused by vague resemblance between turtle shells and horns or coconuts. In order to make luxury items from turtle, the shell is cut up and the scales are taken apart, heated, pressed and worked. The hawksbill turtle is in danger of extinction. The seizure was made thanks to a combined effort of the Costa Rican NGO Pretoma (Program for the Restoration of Sharks and Marine Turtles), agents from the Minister of the Environment and Energy (MINEA), the ACCVC (Central Volcanic Mountain Range Conservation Zone) and the Sea Turtle Conservancy. Initially, the alert was started by a local environmentalist, Claudio Kesada. The market for turtle eggs and products derived from turtles is very active in Costa Rica. The identification capacities of MINAE agents and the other services are, even combined, insufficient.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the main markets for turtle shell were found in Europe and North America; the shell is used to make combs, brushes, glasses frames, and luxury articles. With the arrival of plastic, the demand for turtle shell for utilitarian means diminished; however, this material conserves a prestigious place in markets for high end goods.

## ASIA

**Seizure of about 300 frozen sea turtles (Appendix I)**

**Balabac Island, Province of Palawan, Philippines  
October 18, 2013**

The Vietnamese trawler was specialized in turtles. The holds were full. About 300 turtles were counted by Philippino border police. The Palawan Archipelago is a treasure island for Asian sea poachers. 4 turtle species are bound to be concerned: loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*, Appendix I), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I), hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I), leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*, Appendix I).



**Seizure of 94 frozen turtles (Appendix I)  
Cuong Pho, Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam  
October 25, 2013**

The turtles weighed between 5 and 20 kg each. They were found in a refrigerated truck. The driver was arrested. He said he bought the ton of turtles from a fisherman in the town of Binh Chau (Quang Ngai). He wanted to sell them for US\$ 330-560 (7-12 million dong VND-Vietnamese) apiece in the province of Binh Dinh.



Fishing Boats in Binh Chau

**Seizure of 10,000 sea turtle eggs (Appendix I)  
Balabac Island, Archipelago Palawan, Philippines  
November 3, 2013**

The 10,000 eggs stolen from nesting beaches were destined for consumption in Malaysia. The fishing vessel caught by the Indonesian maritime police came from the Malaysian state of Sabah, namely from the port of Sandakan where land and sea turtle egg traffic is very active (see « On The Trail » n°1).



Sandakan



## GOOD NEWS

**Release of a leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*, Appendix I)**

**Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam**

**December 2013**

At last a restaurant chef that does not cook turtles! He convinced a neighbor to release a leatherback turtle captured on the beach near the local airport. The next day after a veterinary examination, «he was released to the ocean where he belongs» as the ENV NGO said. The chef had already facilitated a few months before the hatching of 60 leatherback turtles eggs.

## EUROPE

**Seizure of one loggerhead turtle and a shell (*Caretta caretta*, Appendix I), 2 rostrums from common sawfish (*Pristis pristis*, Appendix I) and different types of coral (genus *Dendrophyllia*)**

**Garachico, Canary Islands, Spain**

**December 2013**

The seizure was carried out in a restaurant by the environmental protection services of the Guardia Civil. Turtles and other animal parts were exhibited for the customers. The owner was not able to provide the required legal documents. 42 coral species of the genus *Dendrophyllia* are listed in CITES.



## OCEANIA

**Seizure of 55 kg of sea turtle meat (Appendix I)**

**Le Bourg, Hao Island, French Polynesia**

**December 30, 2013**

The turtle meat was seized by police at the home of a 37 year old man. 2 accomplices were questioned. They said that they caught the turtles for their own consumption. They have been summoned to appear before Court in Papeete, Tahiti, in June 2014. All sea turtles are listed in Appendix I of CITES. In this area of the Pacific lives, among others, the olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), the loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and the leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*).

## Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

**Total seizure from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>th</sup> December**

**8,133 tortoises and freshwater turtles  
8,930 tortoises and freshwater turtles eggs**

## Domestic Reptiles: Health Hazards



It is well known that they can bite, scratch and suffocate children. That's not all, they can also infect them ! The phenomenon has been researched since the 1960s. The accused animals are lined up in the following order: iguanas, turtles, snakes and lastly lizards.

The French Institute for Public Health and Surveillance (InVS) carried out a bibliographic review of worldwide publications, ranging over a twenty year period, on salmonellosis in young children following exposure to reptiles. They found 871 cases of Salmonella transmitted by reptiles, of which 77 were isolated cases and 794 were epidemic cases. The study by InVS is obviously not exhaustive, not all cases have been recorded in the scientific database. The majority of infected children were younger than one year old. Frozen rodents used to feed reptiles have also been identified as a potential origin of 2 outbreaks. Another outbreak occurred following a visit to a zoo.

In the lightest cases the child merely suffers from gastroenteritis, however, the child could also suffer from growth deficiencies or meningitis. In the worst cases, the child dies. To date 4 deaths have been recorded.

Avoiding direct contact is not sufficient. Salmonella can be transmitted via contact with parents' hands or via the environment. In environments with favorable temperature and humidity Salmonella could survive for a couple of days.

This worldwide study was complemented with a study on French cases. It revealed that out of 13 families impacted and interviewed, 12 were unaware of the risk of transmission of Salmonella from reptiles to children.

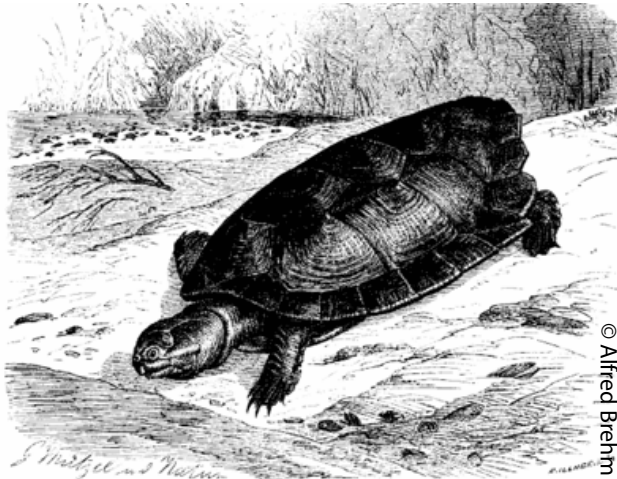
The InVS recommends not exposing young children to reptiles which are qualified as reservoirs of Salmonella. In the United States, the acquisition of a reptile into a family with an infant under 5 years old is not advised and eviction of the animal is recommended with the arrival of a new born baby. <http://www.invs.sante.fr/beh/2014/1-2/index.html>



## AMERICA

### **Seizure of 2 live giant South American turtle (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II) Ipiales, Nariño Department, Colombia October 1, 2013**

Authorities in Ipiales sent out a call for people to inform on illegal trafficking of protected species. Reports may concern actions such as street sales or illegal transport. In this context 2 giant South American turtles were seized in a shopping mall. They were put into the care of specialists.



### **Seizure of 3 turtles of the *Staurotypus triporcatus* species and one turtle of the *Trachemys scripta* species Between Cardenas and Comalcacó, State of Tabasco, Mexico. October 2013**

During a roadside check stop 3 turtles of the *Staurotypus triporcatus* species and one turtle of the *Trachemys scripta* species were found in the pick-up truck trunk on the road from Cardenas to Comalcacó. These turtles are not yet listed by CITES but, in Mexico, they are listed on the NOM-059-SE-MARNAT-2010, that is the "official norm 59 of the Environmental and Natural resources secretariat" published in the Official Journal in December 2010, protecting some endemic species of flora and fauna wildlife. The 2 species of turtles are respectively under the "endangered" and "subject to specific protection" status.



The road from Cardenas to Comalcacó

### **Seizure of 11 arrau turtles and 8,930 eggs (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II) Puerto Leguizamo, Departement of Putumayo, Colombia December 2013**

The seizure took place during monitoring operations carried out by the army. The turtles and the eggs were transferred to a specialised center to be reintroduced into the wild. Arrau turtles lay around fifty eggs a year.



## ASIA

### **GANG**

### **Seizure of 6 live tortoises and tortoise meat (*Testudinidae* family) Nara Canal, Sindh Province, Pakistan October 1, 2013**

The tortoises were easily captured with nets in the Nara canal and lakes with the use of a chemical that could be cyanide in small amounts. According to the gamekeeper of the district, a gang of 15 poachers was involved in hunting tortoises. The gang had been active the area for a long time. 3 men were sentenced to a fine of Rs 20,000 each (about US\$ 200). Tortoise meat is worth about US\$ 47 per kilo on the Karachi market. The captured tortoises were released back into their ecosystem and the meat was burned. These were most likely black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I).

### **Seizure of 335 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) approximately 330 of which were alive**

### **Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, China October 1, 2013**

A 26-year-old man whose nationality was not revealed was sentenced at the Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Courts on October 3rd to 3 months in prison for the illegal import of endangered species and 3 months imprisonment for animal cruelty. He was intercepted by customs at the airport in Hong Kong on October 1st as he was arriving from Thailand with 338 freshwater turtles in his luggage. Almost all were black pond turtles. 330 were still alive. The AFCD (Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Society) in collaboration with the Kadoorie Farm that temporarily adopted the turtles are trying to decide on the best possible homes for these specimens of an endangered species whose range is restricted to Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. According to routine procedure, live animals are never returned to their country of origin.

The black pond turtle is a freshwater turtle in danger because of pollution, habitat loss, appetite of the human species and sometimes the global market for new pets. The ruling is significant in that it is based in part on animal cruelty.

**Seizure of 206 live turtles  
Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India  
October 31, 2013**

The police discovered the turtles in a bus depot in the north of town. Their exact species is unknown. The Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) is the object of an intense trade in West Bengal.

**Seizure of 72 black pond turtles, 6 crowned river turtles (*Hardella thurjii*, Appendix II), one threekeeled land tortoise (*Melanochelys tricarinata*, Appendix II) and one Indian eyed turtle (*Morenia petersi*, Appendix I).**

2 bags arrived on a flight from Bangladesh were spotted by customs because of their rotting smell : they hosted 80 turtles from 4 different protected species, more or less alive.

**Seizure of 423 live Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and 52 live black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)  
Bangkok International Suvarnabhumi Airport, Region of Center, Thailand  
November 6, 2013**

2 specially heavy luggage waited in vain for their owner on the arrivals turnstile. After a few hours, customs intervened and found 475 turtles of 2 different species. They were transferred to the care of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

**Seizure of 470 live black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)  
Bangkok International Suvarnabhumi Airport, Central Region, Thailand  
November 8, 2013**

Bangkok International Airport is decidedly to this day the first airport in the world for turtles' take offs and landings. The famous *Geoclemys hamiltonii* claimed by Pakistan as a pillar of national biodiversity were found hidden in 4 suitcases of a Pakistani citizen from Lahore, capital of Punjab.

**GANG**

**Seizure of 400 live turtles  
Railway station in Kanpur, State of Uttar Pradesh, India  
November 25, 2013**

More and more women are recruited by gangs to transport animals. The services of Indian Railways will accordingly recruit women inspectors, who will facilitate the search and arrest of female smugglers. 400 live turtles found aboard the express connecting Delhi to Kolkata in the luggage of 7 indicted women will be released into the Ganges river. In Rajasthan, women of the Kanjar tribe are said to be active in the hunt. Used by local farmers to

protect crops from the incursion of nilgai antelopes (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), they would in fact engage in intensive poaching.

In Uttar Pradesh, all species of turtles are traded : Brahminy river turtle (*Hardella thurjii*, Appendix II), Indian eyed turtle (*Morenia petersi*, Appendix II), Indian flapshell turtle (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II), brown river turtle (*Pangshura smithii*, Appendix II), Indian black turtle (*Melanochelys trijuga*, Appendix II), peacock softshell turtle (*Nilssonia hurum*, Appendix I), Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I), Indian roofed turtle (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I), Indian tent turtle (*Pangshura tentoria*, Appendix II), Indian narrow-headed softshell turtle (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II), red-crowned roofed turtle (*Batagur kachuga*, Appendix II), black pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), three-striped roofed turtle (*Batagur dhongoka*, Appendix II).

**Seizure of 6 live Indian soft-shelled turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I)  
Hirakud Dam reservoir, State of Odisha, India  
November 25, 2013**

The Forest Department, with the help of a tip off, was able to free the turtles that poachers had left in the dam's reservoir, their paws tied with ropes. They were going to be sent to Kolkata in West Bengal where the demand is quite high. After a positive veterinarian check up the animals were released. The forest guard said each turtle weighed between 20 and 30 kg.

Indian soft-shell turtles are mainly captured for their meat. Their shells are also sold as masks to tourists. They also are appreciated as pets and decorative animals.



**Seizure of over 2 400 live Indian soft-shelled turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I)  
Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India  
November 28, 2013**

The trucks were on the road towards Bangladesh. They had been spotted near the airport. The load of turtles could come from Uttar Pradesh.

**Seizure of Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) and Indian bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II)  
Salvador do Mundo, State of Goa, India  
November 29, 2013**

They were busy capturing batrachia and reptiles in ponds. Local villagers warned the Water and Forest services and the Animal Rescue Squad.





*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*

**Seizure of 2 live Indian Star Tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)**  
**Kharghar, State of Maharashtra, India**  
**November 29, 2013**

The 2 turtles were found in a pet shop. The owner of the store and his assistant, ages 34 and 19, were arrested before being let out on bail. They are suspected of trafficking of protected species illegally sold on the Crawford market or in the Thane and Navi sectors of Bombay.

**Seizure of 62 live radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I)**  
**Suvarnabhumi International Airport, Bangkok, Thailand**  
**December 10, 2013**

Another tortoise finding at the Bangkok airport. Customs decided to scan abandoned luggage. The tortoises were hidden inside the lining. They nevertheless were able to identify the owner from Madagascar. He had boarded in Antananarivo. The tortoises were put under the care of the Thailand National Parks, wildlife and flora conservation Department. The rare species is endemic to Madagascar. Their habitat covers 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Adults reach 40cm long for 15 to 20 kg. On the island, radiated tortoises are threatened by habitat fragmentation, captures for the pet trade and, which is new, for food. By tradition Malagasies refrain from eating turtles, newcomers to the country including a strong population of Asian expatriates for their part don't refrain.



Turtle airport

**Seizure of 1,000 turtles**  
**Gaya, State of Bihar, India**  
**December 16, 2013**

The 17 bags of Asian turtles were in the back of a broken down car by the side of the road not far from the police station in Amas. People passing by noticed a strong smell coming from the vehicle. The turtles taken from the Sasaram surroundings were being transported to Kolkata over 500 km away.

**Seizure of 1,559 Ganges softshell turtles (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I)**  
**Kanpur, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**  
**December 17, 2013**

The ruins of an ancient fortress were used by the turtle kidnappers as a base for the aquatic turtle transit. They were stored in a pond. They were released into the Ganges River. The villagers' attention was drawn by the many comings and goings of unknown men.

**Seizure of 340 turtles including Keeled box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*, Appendix II), big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum* Appendix I) and elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II)**  
**Ha Long City, Province of Quảng Ninh, Vietnam**  
**December 2013**

The turtles were being driven by car. The driver was arrested.

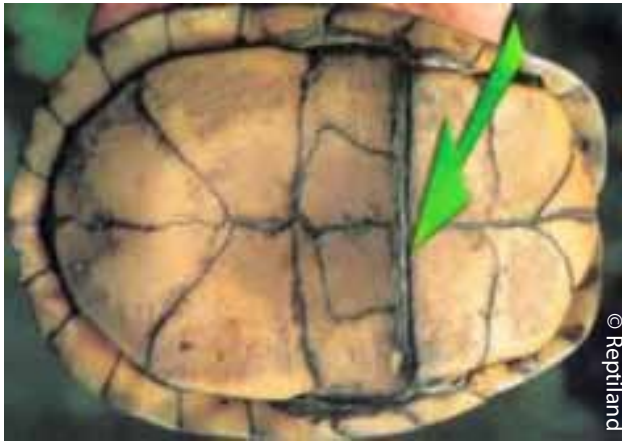


*Platysternon megacephalum*

© Nguyen Tai Thang/ Asian Turtle Program

**Seizure of 185 box turtles (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II)**  
**Xaimen Gaoqi International Airport, Fujian, China**  
**December 2013**

The polystyrene cases had double bottoms. In the inside level were some box turtles endemic to the Philippines. They are named box turtles due to their ability to close up and hide their vital organs when they are on the defensive.



Box turtle breast plate

**Seizure of 600 live Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)  
Allahabad, State of Uttar Pradesh, India  
December 2013**

The 600 Indian star tortoises were in 5 apparently very heavy bags that attracted the attention of the police. The turtles were purchased to rural villagers from Uttar Pradesh for Rs 15 each (US\$ 0.24) to be sold 10 times the price at Rs 100-150 piece (US\$ 1.61 to 2.42) in West Bengal. The conveying was done by train. The traffickers were arrested in Allahabad railway station.

## EUROPE

**Seizure of 30 live exotic turtles  
Bernissart, Region of Wallonia, Belgium  
October 17, 2013**

The brave firefighters of Bernissart had to get under control around 30 individuals entrenched in an apartment of Tilleuls road. The 30 tropical turtles banned from immigration in Belgium because of their natural aggressiveness and invasiveness were finally neutralized. "Some of them could have easily ripped off one of our fingers," comments the officer in charge of the operation. Firemen were alerted by neighbors summoned by barking coming from the community housing apartment abandoned by its renter. The dogs were taken to a shelter of the Society for the Protection of Animals, the turtles were put under the care of the Pairi- Daiza animal park.



## Snakes

### AMERICA

**Seizure of a 6 meter long anaconda skin (genus *Eunectes*, Appendix II)  
Cali, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia  
October 2013**

The skin was exposed in a harness-making workshop in the center of town. According to the owner it was supposed to attract clients. According to the police, there is an illegal trade of anaconda heads. The genus *Eunectes* comprises 4 species, all listed by CITES under Appendix II.

**4 people prosecuted for smuggling a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I)  
State of Roraima, Brazil  
October 2013**

In 2006, a unique specimen of boa constrictor was captured in the forest around Rio de Janeiro. Due to a genetic anomaly the boa was entirely white with black eyes. The animal, one could say a monster from a Freak Show, turned out to be a golden hen. The couple that runs the Rio de Janeiro zoo tried to sell him, as often confusing its educational role with that of money making through the rare species trade. A year later, Jeremy Stone, a snake collector operating in the United States, went to Rio to negotiate the purchase of the white boa. The deal was sealed on the basis of US\$ one million. After attempting to illegally transfer "Princess Diamond" from Brazil to the United States by air and by sea, the chosen solution was to convey the boa by car to Guyana. He there asked the Guyana authorities for a legal permit to export 121 snakes from common species; the boa was hidden in the expedition towards the United States. Meanwhile, Giselda Condiotto, director of the Rio de Janeiro zoo, announced that this phenomenon had passed away. But the story does not end there.

In 2011, the zoo was closed for cause of animal abuse and animal trafficking. At the same time, Brazilian biologists from the IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for the environment and renewable natural resources), still searching for what they consider an exceptional genetic heritage belonging to Brazil, noticed on Jeremy Stones web site an adult white boa and acquired the firm conviction that this was the sought-for Brazilian specimen. As for proof, they found their case essentially on pictures of Giselda Candiotto that show she has met Jeremy Stone.

Jeremy Stone apparently succeeded in making "Princess Diamond" have white babies. Her descendants would have been sold for US\$ 35 000 and US\$ 25 000 all over the world and particularly in Italy.

Brazil has issued an arrest warrant for the American breeder who has declined invitations to make any comment concerning the case, just as did the former Rio de Janeiro zoo directors. Jeremy Stones' home and other properties were searched by United States police, to no avail. "Princess Diamond" has disappeared. Brazil holds firmly their ground. A Brazilian federal police spokesman highlighted: "the boa was initially captured in the forests, the



whole line of descendants belong to Brazil." The Roraima public attorney is demanding US\$ 2 million in damages from the director of the zoo, her husband considered her accomplice, from Jeremy Stone and his sister suspected to have actively participated in the illegal export of "Princess Diamond" to the United States.



Jeremy Stone showing himself with "Princess Diamond" on YouTube.

**Seizure of articles of leather-reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) and of silver fox leather (*Vulpes vulpes*, Appendix III in India) Guarulhos International Airport, State of São Paulo, Brazil  
October 2013**

IBAMA seized articles of exotic animal leather. The importer and the Italian supplier are accused of submitting false information, introduction of specimens of exotic animals without a license issued by competent environmental authorities, and the illegal sale of exotic wildlife.

## ASIA

**Seizure of 11 kg of common rat snake (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II), 25 kg of king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) and 9kg of turtles Province of Tay Ninh, Vietnam  
October 29, 2013**

The smugglers admitted having received the delivery at the Cambodian border. The common rat snake is hunted for its skin, meat and gallbladder. Their range goes from Iran to Indonesia. During winter snake meat consumption goes up a lot because consumers believe it has a "warming effect". In other words, eating common rat snake or king cobra is a good way to prepare for a tough winter.

**Seizure of 20 live Australian green tree pythons (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II) Xiamen, Province of Fujian, China  
October 2013**

Chinese postmen can't get over it. This is the first time that live animals are found in parcels sent from within China to another area in the country.

**Seizure of 121 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) Pudong International Airport, Shanghai, China  
November 6, 2013**

A Chinese citizen of about 30 was travelling from Hong Kong and has not declared his luggage contained animals. The ball pythons, originated from Africa, were detected by the x-ray scan baggage check. When questioned about the suspicious shapes inside the luggage, the man first said they were plastic toys. Then, facing the facts, the clever man declared he wanted to raise them as pets. The 121 snakes were packed in 21 boxes. Ball pythons are poached for their meat, their skin and to feed the pet market. Prices on the black market are of approximately € 300 per individual, varying according to color and pattern.



**Seizure of 3 living cobras (family Elapidae) Bangalore, Karnataka, India  
November 19, 2013**

« On the Trail » is not stingy with stories that are crazy, extraordinary and cruel. This one is not far from reaching new heights.

A native individual from Andhra Pradesh inspired no doubt by local skill removed the venom gland from the 3 cobras and inserted into their upper jaw fake cobra beads.

Real cobra beads, called nagamani in the local language, grow in the upper jaw. They are made of chlorophane, a variety of fluorite. The chlorophane shines when it is in contact with heat sources like the human hand. Magical virtues are attributed to cobra beads. Good fortune is assured for those who hold them. The real ones are sold for high prices.

Forest officers following a tip off, pretended to be interested in the purchase of the 3 cobras carrying

the false beads, thwarted Rama Rao's scheme and with the assistance of local police sent him behind bars. The 3 cobras were transferred to Bannerghatta Animal Park. Having undergone such mutilation, they could not be released into the forest.

**Seizure of 1,410 reticulated pythons' gallbladders (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II)**  
**Luohu, Province of Guangdong, China**  
**November 2013**

The 1,410 reticulated python gallbladders were in the luggages of a passenger getting out of a ferry boat. The load is evaluated at 3.1 million Yuan (US\$ 511,367). Python gallbladders are used in traditional medicine to kill parasites, cure eyesight disorders, rashes and malarial fever. Ground into powder and diluted in wine or water, the gallbladder is swallowed. Mixed with civet musk it can be used as cream for skin ulcers, with almonds against gum inflammations, with olive oil against hemorrhoids.



© Douanes chinoises

**Seizure of an Asiatic Rock Python (*Python molurus*, Appendix II)**

**Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal**

**December 4, 2013**

A snake charmer from Rajasthan was arrested on the city square. There are serious doubts regarding the origins of his Asiatic Rock Python.



© Nepal Police

Asiatic Rock Python

**OCEANIA**

**Seizure of a live carpet python (*Morelia spilota*, Appendix II)**

**Donnybrook, State of Western Australia, Australia**  
**October 20, 2013**

The carpet python was seized along with small quantities of drugs. Its origin is unknown.

The carpet python is a nocturnal snake. They can live between 15 and 20 years. He gets his name from his skin color made of gray and brown stripes, resembling those of a carpet.



*Morelia spilota imbricata*





## Snake venom

Pressure set on venomous snakes, first in line being the king cobra and Indian Cobra also known as naja, 2 species protected by international and Indian law, is getting worse. A new threat has appeared. The dried venom is ground to powder and sold US\$ 400 to 500 a dose under the names K72 and K76. It gives users a feeling of euphoria and resistance to fatigue. The use of K72 and K76, ecstasy, ephedrine, cocaine, rohypnol and LSD is at its highest during Divali celebrations (festival of lights), Saint Valentine's Day and New Year celebrations. Police forces observe that venom seizures are more frequent at the up comings of these events. Snake venom consumption is in style in all big cities, Mumbai in particular. Cobra venom is the most sought for yet other snake species are concerned, not to mention fakes and other mixes. Skin, meat, ancestral snake charming, herpetologists' collections are no longer the sole dangers for snakes. This new found use for cobras is all the more worrisome that it calls on the new generations. It came from the many superstitions and black magic animal practices historically taking place over the Indian sub continent. Some states such as Maharashtra have started to tackle them with special laws that, as reported in this issue of « On the Trail », led to violent reactions.

### Seizure of 600ml of King Cobra venom (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II)

Bhubaneswar, State of Odisha, India

October 22, 2013

It's not usual to occupy a hotel room to sell cobra venom. That is what happened near the town's older train station. The 6 suspects presented themselves as businessmen except for one who is a security guard at the Bihal power plant. They apparently got the venom from snake charmers in Jamshedpur who usually supply themselves in cobras in the Ghats forest near Nepal. Another possible origin could be the Jharkhand State near Bangladesh. The venom was held in small plastic vials. It was sent to Mumbai to a specialized laboratory for analysis. False denomination is frequent. If it turns out to in fact be King or Indian cobra venom, one vial would be worth US\$ 160,000 in the area. This is the first time such a large quantity of venom is found in the Bhubaneswar city (population 800,000).



Indian Snake charmer. Fights between snakes and mongooses are still organized.

© The Secret Museum of Mankind. Undated

### **Seizure of 1.7 litres of cobra venom (family Elapidae)**

**Navi Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India**

**October 31, 2013**

Cobra venom is flowing in Mumbai. To make 1.7 liters a cobra has to spit 400 times. A bus driver from the Best Company is implicated, so is a school employee. The venom came from the north, from Uttar Pradesh. On the black market, the local value of the seizure, if deemed authentic, is US\$ 320,000.



### **GANG**

#### **Seizure of 3 liters of snake venom**

**Kagal, State of Maharashtra, India**

**November 16, 2013**

A forest guard was in on the traffic. Working in the Goa forest, his position was ideal to organize the capture of the snakes and extract the venom. But the gang was infiltrated. The buyer was really a police officer. The sellers showed a certified document from a laboratory in Pune guaranteeing the origin. Its validity is being verified. The announced value of the seizure, US\$ 25,000 per liter, would suggest the venom was not taken from cobras but from other venomous snake species.

### **Seizure of 500 ml of cobra venom (family Elapidae)**

**State of Kerala, India**

**November 29, 2013**

The 2 venom traffickers were arrested near a bus stop of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation near the Indian Ocean. They were about to exchange a half liter of the yellow liquid against US\$ 60,000. Once retailed, that half liter would have brought in US\$ 80,000.

### **Seizure of 500g of snake venom**

**Siliguri, State of West Bengal, India**

**December 8, 2013**

The 4 venom dealers were arrested in the Darjeeling district close to the borders with Nepal and Bhutan, on the parking lot of a luxury hotel. One of the suspects is a police inspector. The venom was kept at his home. Value of the seizure is estimated at US\$ 160,000 (Rs 10 million), a high rate that corresponds to king or Indian cobra venom.



## **Sauria**

### **ASIA**

#### **Seizure of a live Indian monitor (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I)**

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

**October 20, 2013**

They tried to escape with a plastic bag, which contained an adult lizard weighing about 5kg. The latter was released into the forest, but the 4 hunters were put in custody and could be facing up to 3 years in prison upon further investigation.

#### **Seizure of 5 live marbled water monitor (*Varanus marmoratus*, Appendix II)**

**San Jose, Province of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines**

**November 10, 2013**

Dr. Sison Mundita Lim, director of the Office of Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, discovered the traffic while driving to Manila. 3 traffickers, including 2 women, were trying to sell the monitor lizards along the road for US\$ 7 per piece (300 PHP). Specimens measured between 91cm and 1.6m and weighed between 1.2 and 2.5kg.





At the same time, was also seized a southern giant slender-tailed cloud rat (*Phloeomys cumingi* outside CITES) weighing 6.5 kg. It was for sale for US\$ 12. This animal is endemic to the Philippines. «The giant slender-tailed cloud rat is very rare. Few of my countrymen know it. It is found only in the Philippines» says Dr. Mundita Lim Sison. The animals were taken to the Regional Wildlife Rescue Center in Calauan (Laguna). Micro chips will be implanted on the animals before their release.

**Seizure of 10 Hardwick's spiny-tailed lizards (*Saara hardwickii*, Appendix II)  
Bangaon, West Bengal, India  
November 20, 2013**

Towards 5 in the morning, a mobile brigade of Indian customs ambushed 2 rascals who tried to enter into Bangladesh with 10 Hardwick's spiny-tailed lizards, of which certain parts can remedy impotency according to local beliefs and worth no less than US\$ 30,000 on the international market.



*Saara hardwickii*

**Seizure of 38 Hardwick's spiny-tailed lizard (*Saara hardwickii*, Appendix II)  
Beermadera, State of Rajasthan, India  
November 26, 2013**

Guards from the Forest Department heard that a gang of poachers were digging up geckos. With immediate on-scene intervention they arrested the poachers and found the animals dying, their spines were broken hit with a rock. The rocks, bags and other accessories were seized. Gecko populations are undergoing a rapid decline. They are caught so to extract oil from their tail. It is falsely thought to be an aphrodisiac.

**Seizure of 288 living common water monitors (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II)  
Tuen Mun, Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China  
November 2013**

A freight of monitors destined to end up as dinner were seized as part of an operation against contraband directed conjointly by the police and the customs of Tuen Mun. Reptiles more than 1.5 meters in length were contained in 48 wooden boxes pierced with holes, 5 or 6 in each box, and destined for continental China. The species enjoys primary forests, mangroves, and swamps. Their distribution is large but their preferential habitats are faced with many pressures.



**Seizure of 3 clouded monitor bodies (*Varanus nebulosus* Appendix I) or two-banded monitor (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II)  
Mengla County, Province of Yunnan, China  
November 2013**

The catch took place at the Chinese border aboard a bus coming from Laos.




**Seizure of 3 live monitor lizards (genus *Varanus*, Appendix I or II)  
Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India  
December 8, 2013**

They were packed in plastic woven bags. The monitor lizards weigh between 2 and 2.5kg. 2 men wanted to sell them on the Attibele Circle Market place, a neighborhood in Bangalore. The 4 species of monitor lizards found in India are listed in Appendix I or II: *Varanus bengalensis*, *Varanus flavescens*, *Varanus griseus*, *Varanus salvator*.

## Crocodilians

**Airsickness**

**Seizure of 644 caimans (Alligatoridae family, Appendix II). Schiphol Amsterdam Airport, Province of North Holland, Netherlands.**



FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE IN CASE OF SICKNESS.

**Late November - mid- December 2013**

At the end of November 2013, a shipment of caimans flew from Guyana aboard an airliner bound for the Netherlands. The merchandises transported in the baggage hold passed through Canada and Turkey before reaching Europe. Upon arrival at Schiphol Amsterdam, 318 caimans were dead and others were in a desperate state. The caiman boxes were overcrowded. Designed to accommodate 3, each box contained 50. The animals died of cold and suffocation.

In mid-December, another expedition of 200 caimans and 3 snakes between Guyana and Ukraine via Amsterdam went wrong. At Amsterdam stopover, 48 alligators were already dead. The 3 snakes and at least 14 other caimans were about to pass away too.

Dutch veterinary services are also regularly exposed to illegal import attempts of birds and other animals. The latest case on December 10<sup>th</sup> relates 6 birds - Thick-billed Seed Finch (*Oryzoborus funereus*) and Chestnut-bellied Seed Finch or Picolets (*Oryzoborus angolensis*) – arriving from Surinam. They were wrapped up, the passenger was trying to pass them under cover of Christmas gifts.

Amongst the companies that could be used in these non-regulatory animal transports, « On the Trail » suspects Caribbean Airlines, Fly Jamaica Airways and KLM.

## AMERICA

**Seizure of yacare caiman leather (*Caiman yacare*, Appendix II)  
Nova Venécia, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil  
October 17, 2013**

Environmental police seized caiman leather at a person's home along with a perfect set of poaching equipment. Anonymous calls alleged the man sold bush meat. He was arrested and faces a fine and between 6 months and 1 year prison sentence for the meat trade. He also faces 1 to 3 years prison term and another fine for illegal possession of firearms.

**Seizure of an American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix II)  
Manzanillo, State of Colima, Mexico  
November 2013**

An individual contacted the specialized services asking them to recover the wild animal. It was bought when still young and small. 10 years later, the male crocodile is 2.5 meters long. It was given to ecological center Cuyutlán «El Tortugario» which will assess whether it can be released back into its natural environment or must be kept captive.

The ecological center Cuyutlán is a sanctuary for turtles created in 1992. Its activities were extended to iguanas and crocodiles.



.....  
: **GOOD NEWS**  
: **Release of 1,900 caimans (*Caiman Yacare*, Appendix II)**  
: **Pantanal, Bolivia**  
: **December 2013**  
: 5,000 baby caimans were seized aboard 2 trucks  
: in the province of Santa Cruz near the border  
: with Brazil. They were captured in aquatic environments and their presumed destination was a  
: breeding farm for luxury leather goods. « On the Trail » n°1 had mentioned this affaire of international dimension. 7 months later, the investigation was not successful but the 1,900 survivors were reintroduced in the swamps of the Pantanal after a period of quarantine, growth and fitness.  
: .....



**Seizure of 17 raw salted broad-nosed caiman skins (*Caiman latirostris*, Appendix II in Argentina) and yacare caimans (*Caiman yacare*, Appendix II) and 11 live broad-nosed caimans Chavarria, Province of Corrientes, Argentina December 4, 2013**

Natural Resources' official services led a large scale operation in an illegal warehouse. The 11 living caimans were released. The Court ordered the arrest of the woman who owns the warehouse.



178 capybara skins (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) were also seized. © roshipotoshi

**Seizure of an Alligator from Mississippi (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) Miami, Florida, U.S.A. December 10, 2013**

Excitement in Miami. At the cash register of a supermarket, a hefty guy wanted to exchange the alligator for a pack of beer. The alligator has been released into its natural habitat. The man was charged for the illegal possession of an alligator.



## EUROPE

**Seizure of a live spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II) Canet-en-Roussillon, Region of Languedoc-Roussillon, France October 2, 2013**

Nobody knows how this spectacled caiman, who usually lives in marshes and backwaters of the rivers of Central and South America, ended up in an aquarium barely his size in a residential area of Canet-en-Roussillon in the South of France. His capture by ONCFS agents - Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage- was not easy. The spectacled caiman is not one to be tamed by a few sweet words and a pat. His rescuers were able to pull him out of the uncomfortable position he was living in. His new horizon is unknown.



The spectacled caiman stuck in his aquarium

## Multi-Species Reptiles

### ASIA

**Seizure of 359 turtles, 9 soft-shelled turtles (*Trionychidae* family), 100 monitor lizards (*Varanus* genus) as well as more than 100 king cobras, water snakes, (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II), and pythons (genus *python*) Khon Kaen, Province of Khon Kaen, Thailand October 4, 2013**

The police searched the pickup truck by night. 2 men, aged 56 and 41, were arrested. They had been paid US\$ 1,918 to transport the load from a Bangkok market to the Laotian border. It's from Laos that Mr. Xaysavang, the wildlife fauna magnate, radiates in Asia and worldwide.

The cargo had to cross the Mekong River. The value of the seized animals is estimated at US\$ 47,966. The police could not determine the origin of the animals.



Young cobra

**Conviction of a man for trafficking protected species: 50kg of clouded monitor lizards (*Varanus nebulosus*, Appendix I), 55kg of common rat snake (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II), 1 cobra (family Elapidae), 1 radiated rat snake (*Coelognathus radiatus* unlisted in CITES)**

**Province of Phu Yen, Vietnam**

**October 2013**

The man responsible was sentenced to US\$ 3,550 in October. The menagerie found in his car was released into the wild.

**Seizure of 6 desert monitors (*Varanus griseus*, Appendix I), an Indian flapshell turtle (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) and a cobra (Elapidae family, Appendix II)**

**Rethal, Gujarat, India**

**November 2013**

Thanks to a tip off, 6 poachers were arrested by forest department agents. The 8 animals buried in bags had suffered mutilation.

Desert monitors live in North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and in Western South-Asia. Strictly diurnal, the desert monitor has to warm itself in the sun before reaching the optimal temperature that allows him to travel several kilometers in search of his prey: lizards, serpents (garter snakes and vipers), rodents, eggs, insects and spiders. They hunt by patiently inspecting burrows and tufts in the vegetation with their extendible and bifid tongues which help them to detect the particular odors emitted by their prey. They measure on average one meter. They possess an elongated neck and a long, robust tail which they can use as a whip. They are hunted in many regions of the Sahara for their skin or to be transformed into "souvenirs". Its head mounted as a talisman is thought to prevent snake bites.



*Varanus griseus*

**Seizure of 200kg of water monitor (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II) and 60kg of elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II)**

**Province of Thanh Hoa, Vietnam**

**December 23, 2013**

The unscheduled stop on a regular bus line puzzled police. Monitor lizards, turtles and venomous snakes were hidden in the baggage compartment. A passenger showed a license to transport the animals with a permit issued by the authorities of a southern province under the name of Nguyen Van

Du, a resident from a northern province. Doubting the authenticity of the document the police seized the goods. The bus driver admitted to being paid to transport the animals over 1,800 km.

## AMERICA

**Seizure of a live Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) and a live crocodile (genus *Crocodylus*, Appendix I or II)**

**Omaha, State of Nebraska, United States**

**October 22, 2013**

It all started with a step family case. The animals were seized from a man after a report was made by the ex-husband of the woman currently married to said man. The ex-husband reportedly saw photos on the Facebook profile of the accused showing his child with a python over its head. The ex-husband, fearing for the safety of his own child also living under the same roof as the accused contacted the animal welfare organization, the Nebraska Humane Society (NHS). The python measured 2.5m. The accused stated that neither he nor his wife ever felt the safety of the children was threatened.

NHS, acting on behalf of the supervisory authorities, confiscated the python on the grounds that it exceeded the allowed size in domestic homes, and a crocodile, which is prohibited in any home regardless of size and species. With regards to the Burmese python, the ex-husband's fears were fuelled by recent events in Campbellton, Canada when 2 young children were strangled to death by a python of the same species who had escaped from its cage (see « On the Trail » n°2, page 21).

**Seizure of 15 live reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), a live amethystine python (*Morelia amethystina*, Appendix II), and a live African savanna monitor (*Varanus exanthematicus*, Appendix II)**

**Gatineau, Province of Quebec, Canada**

**October 30, 2013**

The animals were found at the home of a 24 year-old man thanks to warning from a neighbor and a search warrant. Some of the snakes were wounded. They were put under care of the Little Ray reptile zoo (Ottawa). The pythons measured between 75cm and 4m. Reticulated pythons can reach up to 10 meters long. They come from South East Asia. The amethystine pythons have a limited and regressing range: Queensland in Australia, Irian Jaya and Maluku in Indonesia and the Bismarck Archipelago in Papua New Guinea. The amethystine can measure up to 5 meters long.



The live reticulated pythons' street, Gatineau



**Seizure of an Australian green tree python, (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II), 5 bearded lizards (*Heloderma horridum*, Appendix II), a desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*, Appendix II), 2 American crocodiles (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix II) San Vicente, State of Nayarit, Mexico October 2013**

PROFEPA conducted an inspection at a center approved for hosting wildlife. Of the 75 captive animals, 12 were seized because the owner could not prove their legal origin: an Australian green tree python, 5 bearded lizards, 2 American crocodiles, 2 California king snakes (*Lampropeltis getula californiae*), and an eyelash palm viper (*Bothriechis schlegelii*).

**Seizure of 2 spiny softshell turtles (*Apalone spinifera*, Appendix I) and 6 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I) Mexico, Mexico December 11, 2013**

The animals were being sold on the Nuevo San Lazaro market, more commonly known as the fish-market. In all 136 reptiles were seized: 2 turtles (*Apalone spinifera*, Appendix I), 6 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I), 2 matamoras (*Chelus fimbriata*), 3 viperine water snakes (*Natrix maura*), 1 snake (genus *Conopsis*), 23 saurians (genus *Sceloporus*), 1 Mexican plateau horned lizard (*Phrynosoma orbiculare*), 91 plateau tiger salamanders (*Ambystoma velasci*) et 7 snakes (*Pituophis deppei*). The 2 sellers were arrested by PROFEPA agents. They are being charged with damage caused to biodiversity and risk a maximum sentence of 9 years prison term.



*Apalone spinifera*

## EUROPE

**Seizure of 10 caimans (order Crocodylia, Appendix II), 8 chameleons (family Chamaeleonidae), 10 African pygmy hedgehogs (*Atelerix albiventris*), 6 royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), one rainbow boa (genus *Epicrates*, Appendix II), 9 poison frogs (genus *Dendrobates*, Appendix II)**

**Calais, Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, France November 10, 2013**

The owner came from Holland and wanted to take the tunnel to reach England : he was controlled by customs with more than 80 animals of all species, including alligators. The animals were put in the care of the League for Protection of Animals at Calais. «Most of these are exotic pets but some are illegal wildlife» said the LPA Calais. «After the traffics in arms and drugs, illegal animal traffic is the third largest in the world». The owner did not have autorisations to import this zoo in Great Britain. According to the same source, this fauna was destined for clandestine supply of pet shops on the other side of the Channel. The trafficker could eventually recover some of these animals after administrative regulation, at least those who are not subject to CITES. The others will be given to «listed facilities».

## OCEANIA

**Seizure of an alligator (genus *Alligator*, Appendix I), 2 pythons (family Pythonidae) and a chameleon (family Chamaeleonidae)**

**Wollongong, State of New South Wales, Australia**

**December 11, 2013**

The 24-year-old kept the animals in a shed in back of his house. He had no permit to hold exotic animals. The pythons measured over 2m long. The alligator was a baby. The man will start procedures to legalize the situation before eventually getting back the captive wild fauna. Among other seized animals there were 2 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) and a turtle (*Trachemys scripta*).

# Falconry

**"De arte venandi cum avibus"**\* is the most famous Treaty on falconry. It dates back to 1240 and is partly inspired by a previous treaty written by the Arabian falconer Moamyn. At that époque, guns did not exist and falcons were not submitted to the combined pressure of pollution, electric lines, wind turbines, air and automobile traffic, deforestation, habitat fragmentation, human intrusion and weakening of the food chain. Hunting birds or ground prey with game birds could not have been voiced as a catastrophe to biodiversity by falcon defenders had they existed.



Times have changed. The saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*), the gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), 3 of the favorite species of modern falconry are on their way to a short term extinction and their capture from the wild is just one threat to many. This did not stop UNESCO from listing "the art of falconry" as cultural heritage of humanity in November 2010 following a joined candidacy promoted in particular by the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Morocco, Spain and France.

## \*Of the Art of Hunting with Birds

**Poaching of Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) and gazelles (Cuvier's gazelle *Gazella cuvieri* Appendix I, dorcas gazelle *Gazella dorcas* Appendix III in Algeria and Tunisia, slender-horned gazelle *Gazella leptoceros* Appendix I, dama gazelle *Nanger dama* Appendix I)**

**Tunisian desert, Tunisia**

**November 2013**

The hunting season officially ended on November 24, 2013 in Tunisia. The official closing did not stop poachers from Kuwait and India to arrive with hunting falcons and guns passing through all customs and controls with no difficulty whatsoever including veterinarian controls at the Tunis Airport. Some poachers are arrested by the forest guards and put in custody while the guns and falcons are seized. The suspects are promptly set free as soon as their embassy contacts the Tunisian government.

An official caravan of Qatari dignitaries then set off to the south of the desert where except for specific derogation from governors or the military foreigners are not allowed, for preventing any "terrorist" infiltration into the country. The ornithologist Abdelmajid Dabbar and the press have gathered precise information on the matter none of which has been contradicted. The caravan of hunters was made up of 52 vehicles, four-wheel-drives, trucks, quad bikes, 5 star tents and satellite phones. The heights of the Qatari Emirate were there, luxury poachers including the heirs to the throne, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Houbara Bustard was the main target of these falconry teams. Houbara bustards were common in Tunisia until the last century. They have now almost disappeared from the wild. Their absence is artificially compensated for by the release into the wild of houbara bustards bred in captivity just before the hunters arrive. The falcons receive gazelle meat as a prize, gazelles who are shot dead are also threatened by extinction.



Houbara bustards



**Poaching of houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) and gazelles (Cuvier's gazelle *Gazella cuvieri* Appendix I, dorcas gazelle *Gazella dorcas* Appendix III in Algeria and Tunisia, slender-horned gazelle *Gazella leptoceros* Appendix I, dama gazelle *Nanger dama* Appendix I)**

#### **Algeria**

**Mid-November 2013**

Mid-November 2013, the falconry dignitaries from Saudi Arabia as usual spread over the south Sahara. A large area 2,500km deep was covered before hand by the Algerian army. Security forces escort the poachers at all times in their camp equipped with generators, mobile kitchens run by domestic employees from Yemen. The houbara bustard is their favorite target. Gazelles and pigeons captured alive by children of the local communities and sold to the hunters are fed to the falcons and fill in the hunting board and pillage of local wildlife. Algerian naturalists regret that this exterior pressure put on the fauna of these desert and semi-desert areas of the county happens with the support of national authorities. Several decrees and ordinances protect the 5 gazelle species, the 3 houbara species, the Northwest African cheetah, the Barbary stag, the Barbary sheep, the goldfinch. These paper walls are in no way preventing rapid population decline.



Male and female laggar falcon ©  
Indian Zoology - volume 2

#### **Seizure of laggar falcons (*Falco jugger*, Appendix I with a reserve from Saudi Arabia) and arrest of the poachers Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan Beginning of October 2013**

The specialized services in Pakistan are proceeding more and more to descents into trafficker's homes in the Peshawar region.

-7 laggar falcons were seized in the Thatta and Badin districts. One person was arrested. His 3 or 4 accomplices are on the run.

-In the same area, 2 other falcon trappers were arrested. Pigeons and a laggar falcon were seized.

-Still in the same districts, another trapper was arrested. He kept protected birds.

In Central Asia winter pushes the migratory falcons to the south, the peregrine falcons and saker falcons. In Pakistan, trappers await their arrival and send into the sky the laggar falcon along with starved other birds with little mobility. The migrating falcons dive onto smaller hunting falcons, capture their prey, then land and are in turn immobilized by nets or clothes thrown over them.

#### **Seizure of 12 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I, with a reserve from Saudi Arabia and Palau) Dera More, Sindh Province, Pakistan October 4, 2013**

The 12 peregrines were in a bus heading towards Karachi 400 km away. The bus was coming from Dera Ismail Khan. The falcon's final destination was the Middle East. 4 of them were already dead. A fifth was agonizing. The others were in good shape. After getting their strength back, they were released in the Misri Chah area. The smuggler is being charged with illegal trafficking and has already received a US\$ 189 fine (Rs 20,000).

A peregrine falcon hunting a red grouse  
© Falconry, the sport of kings

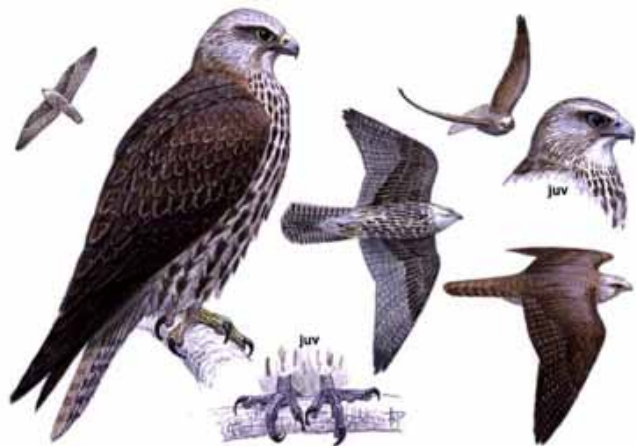


#### **Seizure of 6 live saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan October 9, 2013**

The 6 saker falcons were released in presence of the Province's Minister of the Environment. They had been found at the homes of 3 smugglers who have been put in prison awaiting trial. A regional spokesperson for forest and wildlife protection services speaks with frankness: "These birds are being netted on a very large scale due to their high demand in Gulf countries as saker is the traditional bird used in Arab falconry." The birds had been caught just a few days before. In the midst of this case, it is confirmed that eagles are captured at a smaller scale in the same region and tamed to hunt tetras. Eagles are too slow to hunt houbaras.

Peshawar is the center of the falcon black market. In winter, sheiks and Arab experts converge there. They buy pet birds and then get export permits for them. These short term friends are then released and just before the shipment bound to the Middle East replaced with young falcons, preferably females who are better at hunting than the males. A trafficker in want of sharing and of course anonymously confided to one of the main Pakistani newspapers that Peshawar hosted saker and peregrine falcons captured in China, Afghanistan, Russia and in Pakistan itself. A female falcon can be sold around US\$ 570,000 (Rs 60 millions). The yearly volume of trafficking reaches US\$ 38 million (Rs 4 billion).

Despite the determination proven from wildlife protection services and seizures taking place here and there, it appears one is witnessing the growing or more so a boom of the market to feed the Arab "art of falconry".



Saker falcons



**Seizure of 15 live saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) and one peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I, with a reserve from Saudi Arabia and Palau)**

**Republic of Buryatia, Russia**

**October 2013**

The 15 saker falcons and the peregrine falcon were stuffed into the trunk of a car heading towards Mongolia. The falcons were in very bad shape. Their total value is US\$ 400,000 (13 million rubles). One of the passengers was from Syria. The bird's release is now complicated by the winter season. Snowfall has begun and finding food will be particularly difficult with regards to their physical state. Specialists consider postponing the operation to a later time towards end of 2013 a few hundred kilometers south where the climate is less extreme. It will be easier there for the falcons to find food. In those conditions, reintroduction will have a better chance of success.



© Ministère de l'Intérieur de la République de Bouratie

**Seizure of 19 gyrfalcons (*Falco rusticolus*, Appendix I with a reserve from Saudi Arabia)**

**Jewish Autonomous Region, Russia**

**December 2013**

One of the gyrfalcons was dead. The 2 smugglers were put behind bars at the Far East end of Russia. They risk 3 years prison and a US\$ 30,500 fine (1 million rubbles). They were transporting the mythical birds, virtuosos and acrobats as described in the Delachaux et Nieslé guide on daytime and nocturnal birds of prey in Europe (1978): "A few meters high or close to the ground, they cover landscapes following the ground level, slopes and slants, diving the crevices, climbing the hills and spring suddenly out over ridges...". Falconry is not the only cause for the gyrfalcon population deplete, they suffer also from diminishing of their favorite prey, red grouses and small Arctic rodents. There would be less than 1000 left in Russian Arctic. An individual in good shape can be sold for up to US\$ 100,000.

Several attempts to export falcons from Russia directly organized by Arab princes have taken place these last years. They have escaped judicial sanctions because of diplomatic immunity.



Gyr falcons

© Naumann, Naturgeschichte der Vögel Mitteleuropas.



## PSG striker strikes falcons

During their stay in Qatar, the PSG (Paris Saint-Germain) French soccer team took part in several events organized by the local tourist agency. That is how Zlatan Ibrahimovic ended up in the audience watching a high flight falconry demonstration and posed for a photo next to a wild falcon. Falconry is one of Qatar's pride specialties. This activity is a cause of disappearing of several falcon species and other birds of prey.

In Russia, Pakistan, India, peregrine falcons and saker falcons are captured in nets and sold at the price of gold to Arab falconers. This trafficking is growing. Wild falcons are considered to be more resistant and better virtuoso in their hunting efforts than those raised in captivity. After the taming stage, falcons are mainly used to hunt houbara bustards, a desert bird now threatened with extinction in the wild and listed under Appendix I of the CITES international treaty. Several royal families of the Arab-Persian Gulf Emirates and the Qataris are dedicated falconry advocates. They don't hesitate to practice their skills in Algeria and Tunisia over large landscapes graciously opened to them by local authorities. To feed the falcons, they hunt 4 desert gazelle species protected by CITES and national laws. Before the Qatari hunting troupes arrive on site, numbers of houbara bustards are released resembling what is done in France with pheasants before the opening of the rifle hunting season.

It is despicable for a prestigious French soccer team to participate in promoting such activities, historical yet today irresponsible. Robin des Bois will cover more extensively the damages that falconry inflicts on biodiversity in « On the Trail » n°3, the quarterly on trafficking of endangered animal species, to be published at the end of the month.



© Jean Francois Beauséjour



# Birds

## AMERICA

### **Seizure of 5 live parakeets (genus *Forpus*, Appendix II)**

**Aracruz, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil**

**October 24, 2013**

After an anonymous call, police seized 47 birds including 12 parrots of the *Forpus* genus. The wild birds held in captivity were not registered. Punishment for this offence is a 6 month to 1 year prison term and a maximum fine of 5000 R\$ (US\$ 2100) per individual. They were given for care to the centre for reintroduction of wild animals – CEREIAS- who will release them following examination.

**2 yellow-headed parrots (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I), 2 mealy parrots (*Amazona farinosa*, Appendix II), 2 red-lored parrots (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II), one green-cheeked parrot (*Amazona viridigenalis*, Appendix I), one burrowing parakeet (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*, Appendix II) sealed under Court Order Mexico, State of Federal District, Mexico**

**October 2013**

PROFEPA agents (attorney general's services for the protection of the environment) inspected a grocery. 8 parrots, each one from a protected species, were found. The owner was not able to present documentation proving the legal origin of the animals or certifying he was the rightful owner. The birds were therefore confined on the premises in waits for their status to be possibly regularized.

### **One person arrested for selling 6 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II)**

**State of Jalisco, Mexico**

**October 2013**

The PROFEPA led investigations. Orange-fronted conures measure 20cm long and weigh between 70 et 75 grams. They live in Mexico and Costa Rica in forest areas up to 1500 m altitude.

### **Sequestration of orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II)**

**State of Durango, Mexico**

**October 2013**

The owner did not have the necessary documents to prove legal origin of the 6 birds including orange-fronted conures.



### **Seizure of 2 live military macaws (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I)**

**Manzanillo, State of Colima, Mexico**

**October 2013**

The PROFEPA inspected a hotel. The managers were unable to present documents proving the birds' legal origin. They received a fine.

The PROFEPA also seized a baby Amercian crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix I except for the population of Cuba, included in Appendix II) and freed him into the wild.



*Ara militaris*

### **Seizure of a live northern crested caracara (*Caracara cheriway*, Appendix II)**

**Aguascalientes, State of Aguascalientes, Mexico**

**October 2013**

The bird was in a cage in a car-repair's garage.



*Caracara cheriway*

### **Seizure of a live red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II)**

**Rosarito Beach, Baja California, Mexico**

**October 2013**

The bird was taken from a person's home following an anonymous phone call. One of his wings was wounded. He has first been taken to the Tijuana zoo to receive medical care.

### **Seizure of 4 red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II)**

**Curuzú Cuatiá, Province of Corrientes, Argentina**

**November 14, 2013**

A bird aviary was intercepted by the police a few kilometers from Curuzú Cuatiá, at the intersection of highway 119 and provincial road 126. The load consisted in 48 birds including 4 red-crested cardinals but also european goldfinches (*Carduelis*



*carduelis*). The birds come from Curuzú Cuatiá and neighbor city of Mercedes. The final destination was the town of Ingeniero Budge, Buenos Aires Province. A man in Curuzú Cuatiá is suspected of providing the birds for traffic.



*Carduelis carduelis*

**Seizure of 4 blue-fronted Amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 7 sooty-capped hermits (*Phaethornis augusti*, Appendix II)**  
**Cubatão, State of São Paulo, Brazil**  
**November 21, 2013**

The birds were entrusted to the Municipal Garden of Saint Vincent.



*Phaethornis augusti*

**Seizure of a toucan (genus *Ramphastos*)**  
**Pedra Branca, State of São Paulo, Brazil**  
**November 22, 2013**

The police intervened in a residence after the information was provided on a hotline. The owner had no license to possess the animal. The bird was first taken to the rehabilitation center for wild animals of Seropédica (CETAS) prior to his release into the wild. There are 7 species of toucans in Brazil listed by CITES.



**Seizure of 2 parakeets (family Psittacidae), a white-eyed parakeet (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II), a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 2 frozen armadillos (Order Cingulata)**

**Mesopolis, State of São Paulo, Brazil**  
**December 19, 2013**

The seizures took place at 15 different properties. The environmental police also recovered 14 firearms, ammunition and various hunting equipment. The Blue-fronted Amazon was still a chick and was entrusted to the Rio Petro Zoo.



*Aratinga leucophthalma*

**Seizure of 13 red ibis carcasses (*Eudocimus ruber*, Appendix II)**  
**District of Commewijne, Suriname**  
**December 2013**

2 tourists including one from the Netherlands say to have been approached by a third who offered... 13 red ibises well liked for their bright red feathers and in this case, dead. The 2 strollers, charmed by this unexpected offer accepted to pay US\$ 4,000. They were arrested by police, after a local villager was

surprised seeing them struggling under the weight of the 13 red birds. The seller was also arrested. Red ibises are captured in the mangroves. The migratory population in Surinam is on a fast slope down to extinction.



© Claudio Timm

**Seizure of 7 monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), nanday conure (*Nandayus nenday*, Appendix II), and a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II)**

**Asunción, central Province, Paraguay**

**December 2013**

The seizure took place in the municipal market n°4. The sellers were from the Maka indigenous population. These indigenous people live primarily from selling handicrafts door to door or at downtown Asuncion and at Silvio Pettirossi airport. In Paraguay, to have a wild animal as a pet, you must first register it at the National Register of wildlife and then request an authorization of possession.



© Roland Kratzer

**ASIA**

*Nandayus nenday*

**Seizure of one Himalayan monal (*Lophophorus impejanus*, Appendix I) and 2 musk deers (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II)**

**Gasa, District of Gasa, Bhutan**

**November 2, 2013**

The monal is legendary. This is the bird of the Himalayas. Its natural range marries the chain of mountains. The 2 poachers, one of them a deserter, were surprised in the Jigme Dorji National Park which still hosts some Tibetan black bears, red pandas and snow leopards.



In orange on the map, the monal natural range



© Willem Degenaar

**Seizure of 35 live rare birds : 26 live yellow crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 8 cenderawasih birds (*Paradisaea*, Appendix II) and a black-capped lori (*Lorius lory*, Appendix II)**

**Soekarno Hatta port, Makassar, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia**

**November 3, 2013**

The birds were stowaways on a ship of the Pelayaran Nasional Indonesia (Pelni). Pelni operates 28 passenger ships and freighters serving 91 ports. An eagle and a snake completed the menagerie. Most of the birds were chicks one or 2 weeks old. « When they are strong enough to fly and feed, they will be released into their natural environment » said the director of wildlife in the province of South Sulawesi. The ship came from Papua. All Pelni vessels will now be subject to reinforced survey. Investigations might lead to discovering the traffic organizer. Crew member or passenger? So far, no one knows.



© Blog Fascinados por aves

*Cacatua sulphurea*





**Seizure of over 100 birds: Java sparrows (*Lonchura oryzivora*, Appendix II), hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), parakeets (family Psittacides) ...**

**Galiff Street Market, Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India**

**December 1, 2013**

Police raids keep happening on Galiff Street. Another market in the South of town also attracts policemen and naturalists. "We are seriously considering closing down these high places of illegal wild animal trade." "There are not only birds, we also look out for turtle and mongoose trafficking."

**Seizure of a brown fish-owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*, Appendix II)**

**Hanoi, Region of Red River Delta, Vietnam**

**December 2013**

A foreign tourist signaled via the Education for Nature Vietnam hotline (1800-1522) that there was a bird outside a coffee shop. This "tufted owl", a newcomer to the « On the Trail » bestiary, had been captured a few days before. He was sent to a shelter for medical examination and rehabilitation. There is good hope it will be possible to release him back to freedom.



## EUROPE

**Seizure of stuffed and frozen owls**

**Stanford-le-Hope, Région de l'Est, England, United Kingdom**

**October 8, 2013**

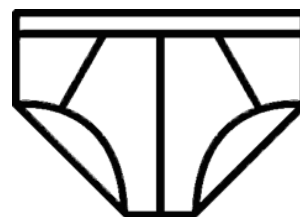
In his freezer there were several frozen owls and in his house 25 stuffed owls. He apparently has illegally sold 150 remains of protected birds. He was released on bail. His trial should take place in January 2014. Remains the questions of how the birds were killed and who were the recipients and what were the modalities of this traffic?

**2 men indicted for trafficking of protected parrot species (family Psittacidae)**

**Zurich, Canton of Zurich, Switzerland**

**October 17, 2013**

The anti fraud section of customs at the Zurich airport uncovered 25 rare bird eggs in the underwear of an exotic birds salesman well known in international networks. 3 years of investigation proved that the birdman had brought into Thailand, Mexico and Indonesia, and with the same transportation methods, 150 parrot eggs and other protected species for a total value of 65 000 Swiss Francs (US\$ 71 840). On one of his partners' properties were found 7 parrots whose value is estimated at 80 000 Swiss Francs (US\$ 88 000). Both business partners will have to pay high fines.



## OCEANIA

**Seizure of 5 galahs (*Eolophus roseicapilla*, Appendix II) and 2 parrots (order Psittaciformes)**

**Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia**

**November 28, 2013**

The Indonesian army's C-130 Hercules was filling the tank at the Darwin airport. The 7 birds were found on board packed in a bag. Galahs live exclusively on the Australian continent. Tender and fun they are very much liked as pets.

No charge was held against the perpetrators. A simple warning was given to 2 members of the crew.

The Australian Minister of Immigration said that the incident will have no consequence for relations between Australia and Indonesia, relations that have been tense over the last weeks and suspicion about possible phone taps of the Australian services on the Indonesian President's cell phone. According to the Prime Minister an investigation is underway.



# Pangolins

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

**The seizure from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>th</sup> December is equal to 9,326 pangolins**

Taking the average weight of 3.5kg per animal and 3 pangolins for 1 kg of scales.

## AFRICA

### **Seizure of a live pangolin Mabelreign Police Station, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe October 6, 2013**

A man argued fiercely with police officers for them to give him back his pangolin. He had "found" him at dusk, on his way home from a visit to a traditional healer. He saw this as a sign of blessing sent to him just as it had previously been predicted would happen to him. Against his will, friends of his brought the lucky charm to the police station after distracting his attention with the help of beer. Authorities informed him that the animal is listed among protected species. This is clearly stipulated in Section 20.14 of the Parks and Wildlife Act. The pangolin went through a first examination coiled up, he carried a wound that voiced the brutality of the abuse to which he was subjected. After administration of antibiotics and a few days of rest he will be freed. "After gaining confidence it will uncoil itself and we will see if it is a male or a female," said the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority public spokeswoman. "We know already it weights over ten kilograms."

### **Sentencing to a 9 years prison term for pangolin trafficking Gokwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe October 14, 2013**

A pangolin trafficker was sentenced to 9 years in prison, the maximum punishment set by law in Zimbabwe. Lisa Hywood, founder of Tikki Hywood Trust is alarmed by the rise in thefts of pangolins in natural environments. Her organization is one of the only ones able to release, after an adjustment period, pangolins seized from traffickers. The strong Chinese presence in southern Africa is suspected to be the cause of the boost in traffic.

### **Seizure of a live pangolin Borrowdale, Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe October 28, 2013**

3 women attempted to sell an undocumented pangolin. The police put an end to their small business. The exiled was found in a house. The trio will be prosecuted for the possession and trade of protected animals.



### **Seizure of a live pangolin Province of Harare, Zimbabwe October 28, 2013**

Tikki Hywood Trust receives a new resident pangolin, abandoned by traffickers. It is in a starving condition.

### **Seizure of 90kg of pangolin scales International Airport of Bamako-Sénou, District of Bamako, Mali December 12, 2013**

The scales came from Cameroon via Côte d'Ivoire. They were carried by a man from Mali working for an "Asian" boss. The scale smuggler was getting of an Air Ivoire plane. Fadimata Touré, chief of the hub brigade at the Bamako-Sékou airport, had just received training in matters of endangered species did not miss this occasion to use her new skills. She estimates the value contained in the 3 suitcases is of US\$ 66,000.



## ASIA

### **Seizure of 44 live pangolins (261kg) Province of Quang Ninh, Vietnam October 1, 2013**

Inside the Toyota there was 261 kilograms of pangolin, by the butcher's count. There were 44 live pangolins, by the naturalist's count. They were most likely intended for sale on the Chinese market. The driver fled.



Still alive. For how long ?

### **Seizure of 29 pangolins Pontianak, Province of West Kalimantan, Indonesia October 9, 2013**

Searches have been intensified near the border to Malaysia. Delimitation between Malaysian Sarawak and Sabah and Indonesian Kalimantan is permeable. The pangolins were found in a car trunk.



Dead or alive ?

### **Seizure of 5,900 kg of frozen pangolins Port of Hai Phong, Hai Phong Province, Vietnam October 11, 2013**

Nearly 6 tons of pangolins were wrapped in plastic and cardboard. The small scaled mammals were reported as snappers, fish from tropical waters.

### **Seizure of a sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*, Appendix II) and a palm civet (genus *Paradoxurus*, Appendix III in India), Huong Tra, Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam October 10, 2013**

Aboard a motorbike was more than just an express delivery driver. There was a palm civet, a very rare Sunda pangolin and turtles. The 20 kg of wildlife were headed to be used in restaurants. Civets are hunted in Vietnam and Laos, despite their rapidly declining populations.

### **Seizure of 5 live pangolins Shiwan, Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Traffic police spotted a car without license plates whose driver was changing a tire. When they approached, the man fled. Alerted by the smell, the police found the pangolins in a bag.



### **Seizure of 49 live pangolins Dong Hoa District, Phu Yen Province of Vietnam October 21, 2013**

The pangolins were coiled up in bags in the back of an ambulance. The smallest weighed 1 kg, the largest 10.4 kg. The ambulance refused to stop at a police checkpoint. The car chase finally ended between Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. 265 kg of pangolin meat would have brought in US\$ 30 to 50,000 to the orderer after deducting fees for hunters and the driver. A month later this driver was sentenced to a US\$ 21,150 fine. He had bought the ambulance from a private hospital director.

### **Seizure of 320 kg of pangolin scales Hong Kong, China October 30, 2013**

More fishermen who seem to catch land mammals in their nets. Pangolin scales were uncovered on a fishing boat, along with more than 2,000 game consoles, mobile phones and amphetamines. 2 crew members will be sent to court. The boat was stopped by Customs near Sha Chau Island.



Nice sea fishing !

**Seizure of 25 pangolins (92.3 kg)  
District of Cam Xuyen, Province of Ha Tinh,  
Vietnam  
October 31, 2013**

The pangolins were traveling by bus, each one in a plastic bag.

**Seizure of 91 live pangolins  
Móng Cái, Province of Quảng Ninh, Vietnam  
October 2013**

The customs office in Mong Cai, Vietnam, just before the border with China is far from being idle. Carps, ducks, frogs, ginseng, by the kilo, by the ton and by thousands are seized. The Ford Escort that tried to force its way past the checkpoint was carrying 91 pangolins, for a combined weight of 366 kg destined to be used in China's restaurants.



Móng Cái border post on the Vietnamese side

**GANG**

**Conviction of an individual to 3 years suspended sentence and a fine of US\$ 8,171 for trafficking approximately 50 kg of pangolin scales  
Pingxiang, Jiangxi Province, China  
October 2013**

A man was sentenced to 3 years suspended sentence and fined 50,000 Yuan (US\$ 8,171). He was in relation with Chinese compatriots in Nigeria to organize the trafficking. He took the delivered goods to the Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport

(China) and then sold the scales in the provinces of Jiangxi and Henan. He was arrested in December 2012.



Baiyun Airport

**Seizure of pangolin scales  
Dhodial, Province of Punjab, Pakistan  
October 2013**

« On The Trail » researchers and readers could not escape a nagging question: how are the scales torn from the pangolin's body? The 3 Pakistanis accused of smuggling each received a fine of US\$ 277 (Rs 30,000) for the illegal trafficking of a protected species. As for cruelty, that's free. During the trial it all came out: «the pangolins are thrown into boiling water and as they die, the scales fall.»

**Seizure of 36.5 kg of pangolin scales  
Tianjin, China  
October 2013**

Custom during a routine inspection of a postal service were puzzled by 3 packages. After scanning them, they decided to open them. They discovered some sort of thick nails emitting a strong smell that they sent to a zoological laboratory. They were confirmed to be pangolin scales. This is the first discovery of pangolin scale smuggling by mail. The packages came from Spain. There are no pangolins in Spain.

**Seizure of 2 live pangolins  
Mandalay-Lashio Highway Road, Shan State, Burma  
October 2013**

2 pangolins have been lucky. Instead of the pangolins waiting for them, they were sent back to the forest after a motorcycle ride on the expressway Mandalay-Lashio.





**Seizure of 50 kg of pangolins**  
**Vinh, Region of North Central Coast, Vietnam**  
**November 3, 2013**

The suspicious package found by the station master hidden under the seats of the train contained 50 kgs of pangolin.

**Seizure of 122 pangolins**  
**Thap Sakae District, Central Thailand Region, Thailand**  
**November 22, 2013**

At roadmark 361 of the Phetkasem express route, custom officers seized 122 live pangolins inside a Toyota Fortuner. Each animal had been bought for US\$ 161 (5 000 baht) in Malaysia. Both suspects intended to reach Northern Thailand and the border with Laos. Final destination was China. Each Pangolin would have been sold again for more than US\$ 600 (20,000 baht).



Phetkasem Road

**Seizure of 15.5 kg of pangolin scales**  
**Shenzhen, Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China**  
**November 2013**

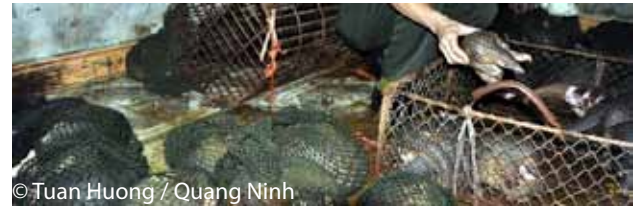
Customs officials were intrigued by some parcels poorly documented. They contained 47 pangolins in the form of scales.

**Seizure of 16 pangolins of which 15 dead, 6 kg of pangolin scales and a python (genus *Python*)**  
**Regency of Banyuwangi, Province of East Java, Indonesia**  
**December 1 & 2, 2013**

This is the first time pangolin trafficking has been discovered in this region. The house's owners have disappeared.

**Seizure of 124 live pangolins (487 kg)**  
**Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam**  
**December 3, 2013**

After information given by the public, police stopped a suspicious car on the road from Mong Cai, called the pangolin road. Mong Cai is at the border between China and Vietnam. The tip off was correct; there were 124 live pangolins on board.



**Seizure of 24 pangolins**  
**Bao'an, Province of Guangdong, China**  
**December 18, 2013**

The 24 pangolins were found in the trunk of a suspicious car.

**Seizure of 5 pangolins**  
**Arga Makmur, Province of Bengkulu, Indonesia**  
**December 2013**

The animals were in a travel agency's car.



**Seizure of 2,032 frozen pangolins and 325 kg of pangolin scales**  
**Shantou, Guangdong Province, China**  
**December 2013**

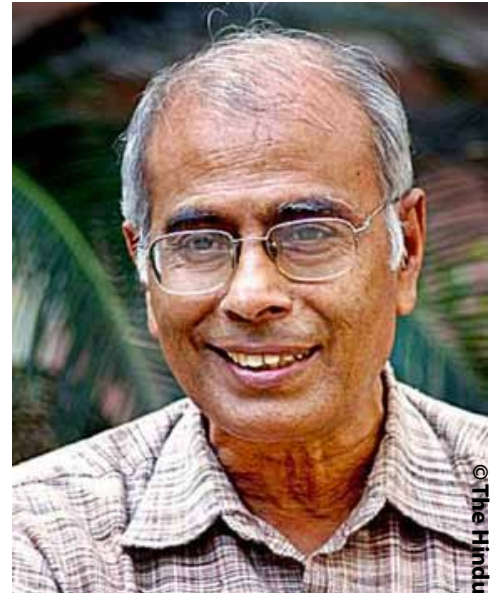
New hard blow for China sea fishing. 6 pangolins fishermen were arrested. The boarded ship was carrying more than 9 tons of terrestrial mammals and scales.



## Anti-Superstition and Black Magic laws

The State of Maharashtra has enacted an Ordinance for the prevention and eradication of human and animal sacrifices, called the Anti-superstition and Black Magic Act. The Act was voted days after Mister Narendra Dabholkar was assassinated. Founder of the MANS Organization (Maharashtra Andhashradda Samit), he had been striving for 18 years for the promotion of this legislative measure. Mister Dabholkar had received many death threats. He was killed in the street in Pune about a hundred kilometers from Mumbai.

A powerful coalition composed of religious interests, charlatans, traditional healers, conservatives, and animal smugglers were opposed and still are to the now applicable Act. The Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Act bans cruelty, mutilations and other violence inflicted on people to rid them of dark forces or call upon good luck. For example, the Ordinance states the act of chaining down a person, to force them to drink spoiled water, to tie them by the hair, force them to sexual acts, to claim to have the power of changing the sex of human embryos, to lead people to believe in evil powers that diminish a herd's milk production, to accuse persons of bringing misfortune onto others and preventing a person from seeking medical advice in case of a dog, snake or scorpion bite and compelling them to take magic remedies, to claim magic rituals can lead to uncovering water sources or hidden treasures.



RIP Narendra Dabholkar

Animals who are precious, useful and protected by Indian law and international conventions are the intermediate victims of this cruelty.

-Slow lorises are captured, mutilated alive and used in barbaric rituals. Cruelties inflicted onto these peaceful nocturnal primates are supposed to in turn to happen to "bad people" designated by the ritual master. The Indian organization People for the Animals witnesses a rise in abuse against lorises in the Bangalore surroundings in the State of Karnataka, in South India.

-15 species of owls and the Eurasian Eagle-owl pay a high price for these black-magic swindles. The most sought for are the species with tuft. After capture, the eyes, the claws, the feathers, the legs are ripped off. Sorcerers advise also to use the owl's beak, eggs, blood to bring on the finding of hidden treasures such as gold coins or precious stones. Seen from that angle, the worst season for owls is the Divali celebrations, the famous yearly festival of lights and wishes for happiness and prosperity. Between mid-October and mid-November owls are in grave danger.

-Of course Indian black-magic ultimately had to prey on the boa, dubbed the two-headed snake, who benefits from a clever device rendering harder the attacks from their natural predators. Their tail looks exactly like their head. The sand boas are associated with beliefs of social and sexual prosperity and also with many remedies for incurable diseases. Captured and also mutilated, cut and sacrificed, the sand boa is sold at high prices.

This black magic industry brings in a lot of money to the hunting gangs and to the many sorcerers billing their services to the naïve, the desperate and practitioners of certain religious communities. The State of Karnataka is considering passing a similar Act than that of its neighbor, the State of Maharashtra. India doesn't have the monopoly of such practices. There are fueled by widespread misery and misleading advertisement, be they written or oral. Vultures in southern Africa are more and more becoming victims of this obscurantism. The paradox comes from the fact that while the vultures are poisoned using modern chemistry, their remains are used for black magic ceremonies and fortune telling.

### **Seizure of a live sand boa (family Boidae, Appendix II)**

**Madurai, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 18, 2013**

A team of the forest department raided a hotel and arrested eight persons in possession of a sand boa. The accused confessed to having caught the boa in Kinathukadavu and intended to sell it in the state of Kerala. In southern India, magical virtues are attributed to sand boas. The defendants each face a fine of US\$ 400. The boa was released in the Anaikatti forest. Along with the sand boa, a turtle was also destined for black magic rituals.





*Loris tardigradus*



**Seizure of a live slender loris (*Loris tardigradus*, Appendix II)  
Vellore, State of Tamil Nadu, India  
October 2013**

Animal activists grouped under the banner of the New World Rescue saved the slender loris. He was in the hands of an animal trafficker near a bus stop in Vellore. The slender loris secretes a volatile toxic substance. According to zoologists this enables him to facilitate predation while setting off predators. Bitten prey would then be doubly weakened and baby lorises would be partly protected by this substance when their fur is coated with it. This substance produced by brachial glands has to be mixed with saliva to be effective. The loris is one of the black magic martyrs.

**Seizure of a live Indian eagle-owl and pieces of eagle-owls (*Bubo bengalensis*, Appendix II)  
Adyal, State of Maharashtra, India  
December 17, 2013**

3 days after the enacting of the Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Act, 10 people including a school teacher, a policeman and business men were arrested after a chase by a forest guard patrol. In the first car there was a live owl and a bag with owl eyes and claws. Another car carrying accomplices was stopped 6 kilometers further. Among the 10 suspects there was a kirkantar, a singer and musician who accompanies black magic ceremonies with hymns and religious mantras. According to first elements of the case, the group was on a treasure hunt near the Gosikhurd dam. The Indian Eagle-owl weighed 1.5 kg. He was on the verge of being sacrificed. They had bought him for Rs 2 lakh (US\$ 3,200). The black magic adepts weren't in luck. The forest guard squad was on the trail of a Sumo car from the Tata brand that was, according to their information, transporting illegally a tiger skin towards Nagpur. They stumbled on a Tata Sumo carrying an owl still alive. He on the other hand was very lucky. The 10 suspects were put in custody and risk being tried for breaking laws on the protection of wildlife and violation of the law on black magic.

**Seizure of an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)  
Matigara, State of West Bengal, India  
December 21, 2013**

The boa was destined for Bhutan, the mythical country of ensured happiness and it's Gross National Happiness. The GNH is founded on 4 pillars: economic development, withholding and promoting culture, protection of the environment and sustainable use of resources, responsible governance. These pillars are declined into 9 domains then into 72 happiness indicators. The Gross National Happiness index was adopted in 2011 by the United Nations. The index is now put in question in Bhutan. The convoy was made of 2 luxurious limousines, the least that can be done for a live snake worth US\$ 45,000. The sand boa is found in Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. They are captured for their supposed medicinal virtues or to join the ranks of exotic pets. Amidst the tissue of superstitions in the Indian sub-continent, the sand boa or two-headed boa is supposed to bring on prosperity.

**Poaching of 37 African vultures (*Gyps africanus*, Appendix II) and an elephant  
Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
November 2013**

A same law as the one just enacted in the state of Maharashtra in India would be very well welcome in South Africa to counter among other beliefs those that imply vulture decapitation. According to recent research led by an economist, Myles Mander, vulture heads supply 10% of certain traditional healers' income in South Africa. The extracted and dried brain would enable to choose the winning numbers in lotteries, to succeed in sporting bets and enhance business opportunities. One of the methods of administration of the goodluck transmitter would be to inhale it in a new form of joint.

Vulture brain is believed also to ameliorate school results and succeed at exams.

The 37 decapitated vultures were picked up 120 meters away from an elephant's carcass whose tusks had been taken. The elephant was probably poisoned and in turn so were the vultures when they fed from the carcass. That is according to Ben Hoffman, a specialist in the region for the protection of vultures.

# Primates

## AFRICA

### Seizure of a live baby mandrill (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I)

Yaounde, Province of Centre, Cameroon

November 5, 2013

Arrested downtown in the capital, the 2 men, aged 21 and 25, were trying to sell the monkey. They said they bought it in the East region, Cameroon.



## AMERICA

### Seizure of a live Geoffroy's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II)

San Francisco De Campeche, State of Campeche, Mexico

October 2013

PROFEPA teams seized a Geoffroy's spider monkey someone's home. He was in a cage. The *Ateles geoffroyi* species is listed under Appendix II, the subspecies *Ateles geoffroyi frontatus* and *Ateles geoffroyi panamensis* are in Appendix I.

### Seizure of 28 primates

Miami, State of Florida, United States

October 2013

After 2 months of investigation, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation dismantled a monkey trafficking network that had been in place for 7 years. Jorge Garcia, 45, had been running an underground business of breeding, trade, and retail of pet monkeys. They were kept in cages and had suffered abuse. The species are unknown.

### Seizure of 2 Guatemalan howler (*Alouatta pigra*, Appendix I)

Jantetelco, State of Morelos, Mexico

December 6, 2013

They were 2 and 4 months old. PROFEPA agents put them under care of the San Juan de Aragon zoo for them to receive special veterinarian attention. One of the 2 did not survive. The trafficker has been arrested and must answer to charges of possession of wildlife threatened by extinction, an offense against biodiversity sanctioned in the Federal Penal Code.



## GOOD NEWS

### Release of 2 Guatemalan howler (*Alouatta pigra*, Appendix I)

Antioquia District, Colombia

December 16, 2013

They were set free in an area between the Anza, Heliconia and Armenia villages. They were separated in 2 groups: 4 in each cage. They had been taken in by a zoo. They were observed during a year and a half before the decision to release them was made. They had been seized in a private home. "Some people feed them hamburgers, a diet that has nothing to do with their natural one," comments Martha Ocampo, veterinarian of the zoo. The 8 howlers rapidly distanced the cages and climbed trees. 36 other mantled howlers have already been released into this private property where the new comers will be able to live in safety, protected from poaching.

## ASIA

## GOOD NEWS

### Release of a southern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II)

Quang Ngai, Vietnam

October 15, 2013

He was lowered to pet rank at one of her friends' house. In September, the lady alerted ENV who convinced the owner of the macaque to set him free with the support of local forest protection services. After a period of observation, the monkey was released into his natural environment.

### Seizure of a live northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II)

Da Lat, Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

November 5, 2013

2 local citizens called Education for Nature – Vietnam after spotting a monkey for sale. The NGO and local authorities were thus able to recover the animal.



*Macaca leonina* are domesticated, hunted to be eaten and sometimes used in traditional medicine. Their bones are used to make monkey bone glue. It is difficult to know the exact indications of macaque by-products in traditional medicine, they vary among user countries. Medicines based on macaque bone would be prescribed for gynecological disorders. The pig tailed macaques are also caught for animal experimentation. The male can reach 12 kg (twice more than the female) and 60 cm high. Farmers sometimes accuse the species to be devastating.

**Seizure of a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arcoides*, Appendix II) and 5 snakes (unlisted in CITES)**

**Lac Duong District, Province of Lam Dong, Vietnam**

**November 25, 2013**

Clients of a restaurant on the corner would eat in in the presence of the little monkey, the 5 copperhead snakes (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) and copperhead rat snakes (*Coelognathus radiatus*), 2 vulnerable species for whom Vietnamese law forbids capture and show.



**Seizure of 16 primates remains Province of Cao Bằng, Region of NorthEast, Vietnam**

**November 2013**

The man caught while transporting 16 dry monkeys carcasses near the chinese border assures he was hired in the province of Thanh Hoa to smuggle the merchandises to a Chinese buyer.



**Seizure of 238 live slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I)**

**Port of Merak, Archipelago of Greater Sunda Islands, Indonesia**

**November 2013**

They were found trapped in plastic boxes and put under care of the International Animal Rescue Foundation Indonesia. Before they arrived at the shelter, 6 of them died of hunger and thirst. Poachers has captured them from the Island of Sumatra and intended to sell them on the markets in and around Jakarta. One suspect was identified, he is facing a maximum sentence of 5 years prison and a 100 million Rupiah fine (US\$ 8,700). Members of the rescue center think the survivors had been recently caught and that it should be possible to free them soon. The loris lives in trees. Intense deforestation is depriving them of habitat.

**GOOD NEWS**

**Liberation of a grey-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix cinerea*, Appendix I)**

**Quang Nam Province, South Central Coast, Vietnam**

**November 2013**

The hotline of the NGO Education for Nature Vietnam allowed for the liberation of a monkey who was on exhibition in a café. The owner accepted to liberate it at the joint demande of the local police, representatives of the ENV and forest officers. The monkey was released, in good health, later that same afternoon in the forest.



**Seizure of a black-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nigripes*, Appendix I)**

**Bu Gia Map National Park, Region of Southeast, Vietnam**

**November 2013**

Hard times for the doucs. The National Park is partly delimited by the border to Cambodia. The tree living species has been disturbed for half a century in center Vietnam first because of war and the use of toxic substances by the US army, then by demographic explosion and extending of cultivated land for coffee, rubber and cashew nuts. Startled by forest guards, the 3 poachers escaped leaving their loot including a douc saved from slavery as a pet or his use for traditional medicine.

**GOOD NEWS**

**Liberation of 2 pygmy lorises (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Appendix I)**

**Binh Thuận Province, Vietnam**

**December 2, 2013**

In Vietnam, some wild fauna guardian angels do not disarm amidst trafficking hell. One of them on finding 2 slow lorises in someone's home convinced the owner to turn in the prisoners to the appropriate authorities who then released them into the Cat Tien National Park. In November, the same savior along with a group of friends had organized the liberation of a captured pangolin.

**EUROPE**

**Seizure of a live slow loris (genre *Nycticebus*, Appendix I)**

**Moscow, Central Federal District, Russia**

**October 8, 2013**

He was arrested in the Moscow Kursky station. He was trying to sell the slow loris for 60,000 rubles (US\$ 1800). He is charged with unlawfully obtaining and holding an animal belonging to a protected species.

There are 5 species of slow lorises: *Nycticebus bengalensis*, *Nycticebus coucang*, *Nycticebus pygmaeus*, *Nycticebus javanicus* and *Nycticebus menagensis*. All are listed under Appendix I of CITES. Their range includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Populations are estimated to have depleted by 30% in 25 years. The loris is victim of loss of habitat, forest fires, car traffic and the exotic pet trade and black magic.



«Курский вокзал», Kursky station



**Several live Pygmy marmosets stolen (*Callithrix pygmaea*, Appendix II)**

**Gáldar, autonomous communities of the Canaries, Spain**

**October 2013**

5 individuals entered a zoo and stole 29 animals including pygmy marmosets. The owner explained that some of these animals and particularly pygmy marmosets have great value; they are the only ones that can be found on the island of Gran Canaria. He is offering a reward for any information that would help find them. In Spain, the penalty for trafficking of exotic animals is a €18 000 fine and 2 years prison term.

Pygmy marmosets live in Bolivia, Columbia, Ecuador, Brazil and Peru. They are among the smallest primates. Their little bodies measure 13 cm, and their tail 20.

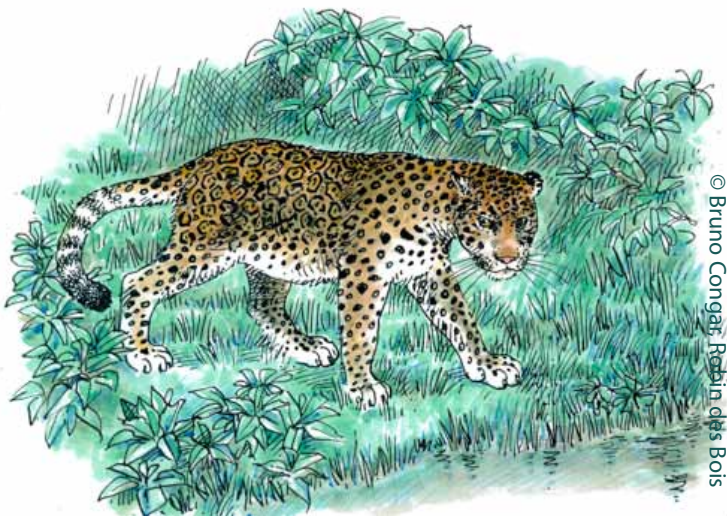


## Felines

**Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) are in Appendix I.**

**Total seizures  
from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>th</sup> December  
18 jaguar, tiger and leopard skins**

### AMERIQUE



Jaguar

#### **Seizure of a jaguar skin and bones El Chirote, Province of Herrera, Panama October 4, 2013**

"It was him or me". Alcines Arena such explains the killing. He says he was attacked on his land. The jaguar would have first attacked the farmer's dogs then went after him. The man defended himself with a machete he happened to be holding while calling for help. His neighbour, Juan Pinto, hearing the shouts and without knowing what was going on grabbed his shotgun along with 4 bullets and ran to Alcines' home. Juan killed the feline with a single bullet. At first the local community supported the 2 men: there is a school only 100 meters away and the jaguar could have come upon children. Some even say he is responsible for some cattle disappearing in the area. But, the 2 men decided to expose the animals' remains in a video they made and to share it on social networks. The video is called "More fun with a Herrera jaguar". It shows a man making fun of the jaguar and its corpse before children and adults. The video caused a strong reaction on social networks and the farmers' behaviour was described as acts of cruelty. Investigations must now determine if the facts qualify as a penal offense and if the suspects' story is true. No jaguar has been spotted in the area for over 25 years.



#### **Sequestration of 8 tigers including Bengal tigers (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I) and Siberian tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I) La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico October 2013**

The Chinese circus "El Nuevo Circo Chino de Pekin" was not able to provide the legal documents necessary to prove legal ownership for 8 of their 10 tigers. The animals have been temporarily left with the trainer. It is interesting that though the felines appear in good physical health the claws of their front paws were cut off and canines removed. These were probably security measures taken to avoid wounds that the tigers could cause each other and prevent attacks against staff and visitors. « On the Trail » nevertheless wants to know what became of the teeth and claws. Did they enter the black market?



One of the 8 sequestered Bengal tigers

#### **Seizure of 2 live jaguarundis (*Puma yagouaroundi*, Appendix I) Tehuantepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico October 2013**

Following complaints from a fellow citizen, PROFEPA officers seized 2 young jaguarundis from someone's home. The seized animals are for one a young male weighing 600 grams with gray fur, the other is a young female weighing 500 grams also with grey fur. They are probably from the same litter. Both of them are wounded. They were taken to the "Yaguar Xoo" where they will be fed and given the needed veterinarian care.





*Puma yagouaroundi*

**Seizure of a live bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II)  
Tolimán, State of Jalisco, Mexico.  
October 2013**

The "owner" of the bobcat says he captured him in order to protect residents of his chicken house. His intention would have been to « free him further away». Bobcats are hunted or trapped for their fur.



**Poaching of a jaguar  
Linares, State of Nuevo León, Mexico  
November 2013**

One more time, proud serial killers in America. Pictures on Facebook showed 2 men posing next to the remains of the cat. It would even have been cooked. The photos were promptly removed. The investigation, if there is one - a report was made to the prosecutor of the State of Nuevo León - will show whether beer drinkers are part of those farmers who claim their businesses are threatened by the jaguar's ability to catch cattle or horses. Jaguars, whose low population does not exceed 2 or 3 hundred in Mexico, is threatened and starved by the gradual disappearance of its natural preys and uncompromising extension of intensive agriculture.



**Seizure of a Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I)  
Guasave, State of Sinaloa, Mexico  
December 6, 2013**

His name is Robinson. He was captured in June 2012 in Caimanero when he was still young and was wandering the streets. He was then transferred to the Hernando de Billafranca town park in Guasave. He was gentle so was placed in a cage without any specific security measures. There is where he was named. A few days later, armed men broke into the park. A gunfight broke out and the commando got hold of the animal. No more news of him. On December 6, 2013, during a military operation, the feline is found tied with a 3 meter long chain in a ranch in Guasave. The PROFEPA announces that the animal is in good health and was taken to the Culiacan zoo. Further research must determine if he was correctly fed and more specifically whether he was fed human meat.

Along with Robinson there were 4 AK47 guns, 5 grenades, 1,200 rounds of ammunition and military type uniforms. The culprits have escaped.

**Seizure of 2 jaguar skins  
Itajobi, State of São Paulo, Brazil  
December 17, 2013**

With the help of anonymous information, the jaguar skins were found at the home of a farming engineer of about 50. They were used as wall decorations. The suspect says they come from animals killed before jaguars were protected by Brazilian and international law. Rifles and ammunition kept without a permit were also seized. The jaguar skin owner was sentenced to a fine of 100 Brazilian Reals (US\$ 430) for the gun possession and investigations are opened to determine the origin and date of the furs.





**Poaching of a cougar (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II)  
Peñón Blanco, State of Durango, Mexico  
December 19, 2013**

PROFEPA lodged a complaint before the Federal Public Ministry against Gilberto Ochoa, an officer from the municipal police department. On December 19, 2013 he had published, on his Facebook account, a photo of himself with a dead cougar which he claims to have killed. Under Mexican law he could face up to 9 years in prison. An investigation will determine whether the cougar was a danger when the slaughter took place. PROFEPA recalls 7 rules to apply for man to coexist with wild animals: remove anything from around the garden which could attract them, avoid feeding and photographing them, remain at a safe distance, put all food waste in tightly sealed garbage cans, store all food so that no smell escapes, monitor cattle especially with the aid of a dog.



**ASIA**

**Seizure of 21 Indian leopard claws (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)  
Trimbak, Maharashtra, India  
October 19, 2013**

Members of the Baheliya tribe were caught peddling a mix of plastic objects and wildlife byproducts, especially leopard claws. 2 people were arrested. A third suspect is at large. The other members of this nomadic tribe have disappeared. Leopard claws are presented as lucky charms, a flourishing market in a population of 1.2 billion people that the unfortunate few thousand Asian leopards are unable to satisfy.



**Seizure of an Indian leopard skin (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)  
Dehradun, State of Uttarakhand, India  
October 21, 2013**

The leopard skin was in a plastic bag. The 5 poachers are now all caught in the nets of justice.

**Seizure of one Indochinese tiger skin (*Panthera tigris corbetti*, Appendix I)**

**Kunming, Province of Yunnan, China**

**October 28, 2013**

What if it was the last one in the Southeast Asian peninsula? An old estimation mentions the figure of 200 individuals spread over Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

**Seizure of skin, teeth, and claws of an Indian leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)**

**Madikeri, State of Karnataka, India**

**October 2013**

The gang of 6 was trying to sell the animal products. 3 of them fled. The local marketing chain consists of a hunter/trapper, a smuggling intermediate, and retailers. At the end of the chain, however, there was a catch: the police inspector Mahesh posed as a buyer seeking to purchase tiger parts for US\$ 12,800 (Rs 800,000).

**Seizure of an Indian leopard skin (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)**

**Rajsamand, State of Rajasthan, India**

**November 24, 2013**

Reminder : on the black market, leopard skin is traded for US\$ 3,000 to 3,500.

**Seizure of an Amur tiger skin (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I)**

**Hunchun, Province of Jilin, China**

**November 2013**

The hide of the most sumptuous of cats, the Amur tiger, was found in the trunk of a car registered in China. The interception took place near the border with Russia.



**Seizure of 950 leopard claws  
Guruvayur, State of Kerala, India  
December 2, 2013**

The arrest took place on the Surabhi Auditorium parking lot. The claws were hidden in the back of a motorcycle. Total value is estimated at US\$ 8,011. Knowing that a leopard has 18 claws, over 50 individuals have been killed. Investigations haven't excluded the possibility of a Sudanese channel. In parallel genetic analysis are being done in laboratory. Good quality counterfeits made of cattle horns are frequent. Leopard claws are good luck charms and decorations.

**Seizure of 2 leopard skins**  
**Routpura village, State of Odisha, India**  
**December 12, 2013**

3 men aged 30 to 46 years old were arrested by forest guards as they were attempting to exit the Similipal Tiger Reserve with the skins.

**3 baby white tigers stolen**  
**The Million Year Old Stone Park and Pattaya Crocodile Farm, Province of Chonburi, Thailand**  
**December 19, 2013**

White tigers are not actually a specific species. They are Bengal tigers with a genetic anomaly. Their fur is white with black stripes. Manipulating breeders cross these tigers among each other to perpetrate this anomaly. Consanguinity will have negative sanitary consequences on the future generations. The theft of the 3 babies took place around 1 o'clock in the morning by people who evidently were familiar with the place. Value of each of the small felines is estimated to be 1 million Baht (US\$ 300,000). White tigers are used to attract visitors.



A white tiger in the Million Year Old Stone Park and Pattaya Crocodile Farm

**Seizure of a Indian leopard skin (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)**  
**Umaria, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**  
**December 19, 2013**

News from Bhopal is bad. 15 leopards were killed over the past months in Madhya Pradesh. Caught in traps, killed with axes, skins torn off, claws ripped off. Concerning this one in particular, one of the accused had bought the leopard skin 2 years ago for US\$ 660 and was now trying to sell it for US\$ 4,800. The leopard skin trade market is healthy. The 3 potential buyers escaped.

**Seizure of an Indian leopard skin (*Panthera pardus fusca*, Appendix I)**  
**Navi Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India**  
**December 27, 2013**

4 young men on motorcycles were arrested at night. The Indian leopard skin was found in a garment bag. The 4 men did odd jobs on farms and offices, they were now practicing a new profession. They were to deliver the skin to a buyer, whose identity has not been disclosed they received a substantial commission from an intermediary.

**Seizure of a tiger skin**  
**Harbin, Province of Heilongjiang, China**  
**December 2013**

In the same area where the Siberian tiger skin was found in November, a new seizure has taken place

in December. This leads to believe that an ongoing network of traffickers is active between East Siberia and China. The woman carrying in and attempting to sell it for US\$ 200,000 says the skin had been in the family for generations. The local General Attorney has ordered seizure of the skin and opened investigations.



**EUROPE**

**Poaching of a male Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I)**  
**Leopard National Park, Primorsky Krai, Region of Far Eastern, Russia**  
**November 2013**

The Amur tiger was found dead with at least one bullet at shoulder level. Males can measure 3.3 m from head to tail tip. In August, the skin of a fellow tiger was seized in the Khabarovsk Krai. Legal follow-up of this seizure is not known.





# The Bengal Tiger

(*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I)

## Family Gangs

Some particularly determined individuals are leading a merciless war on a handful of Bengal Tigers. The nouveau riches in China are willing to pay high prices for tiger skin, including the tail, to use as bedspreads. Voices in India speak out to criticize the passivity of administrative and political authorities. The Minister of the Environment in Maharashtra, the poachers' favorite state, is not well aware there is a problem and the irremovable manager of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) witness 7 years ago of the extinction of tigers in the Sariska, Ranthambore and Panna reserves remains silent and for the least quite discrete. In one year, remains of 12 tigers have been found. Public opinion is wondering if the tiger conservation "machine" has not come to a standstill. It is painful to see those sent before Court and condemned after being clearly designated by investigators as the ones responsible of the Bengal tiger chain of extinction, released in appeal and let out under bail, bail that is paid with the profits from illegal hunting and trafficking.

### **Arrest of 2 poachers of Bengal tigers Raigada, Odisha State, India October 24, 2013**

On the run, 2 poachers were finally arrested far from their base camp and their hunting zone. They were almost released after the legal 24 hours of custody, the expert investigators had difficulties to get back to the town of Raigada in time.

Bhajan, 25 years old, practiced in the Melghat region. Rauna, 22 years old, son of Ujiyaar, worked under the orders of Ajit, his cousin Saranki worked under the orders of Keru. Ajit and Keru are brothers. The former was arrested in September 2013, the second is on the run. To date, 18 poachers, 2 accomplices, Minar, the woman charged with the transportation of the hides and accessories made from tigers, and Sarju, the wholesaler, are all behind bars.

Since the month of June, 20 suspects have been imprisoned : Mamru, Chika, Yarlén, Barsul, Siri, Minar, Srival, Nirafal, Ujiyaar, Lupustan, sarju, Chacha, Lala, Ajit, Saranki, Jiyalal, Parman, Soberam, Rauna et Bhajan.

December 5, 2013 Nirafal, his son Srival, his wife Minar, Siri, Lupustan and Ujiyaar introduced an application to be released into probation with bail. They are all hunters and experienced traffickers.

### **Arrest of 2 poachers Sariska Tiger Reserve, State of Rajasthan, India October 2013**

2 men were arrested at the Sariska Tiger Reserve in possession of poaching tools. They claimed that they were there only to hunt pheasants. Officially there are no more tigers in the Sariska Tiger Reserve.

### **Poaching of a Bengal tiger Melghat Tiger Reserve, State of Maharashtra, India October 2013**

Officially it was not poaching, it was legitimate self-defense of a shepherd. But guards who sniffed out the decomposing carcass covered up with branches noticed that the claws, teeth and other parts of the tiger's anatomy had disappeared. Self-defense or criminal traffic?

### **Poaching of 3 Bengal tigers Madhya Pradesh, India October 2013**

The Baheliya trappers from Katni are suspected of combing central India. In their fiefdom of Madhya Pradesh, 3 new plunders of tigers have been discovered. The killers were part of the gang of Sarju and Surajpal (see « On the Trail » n°2, feline section).

### **Arrest of 5 people for poaching tigers Mahof, Uttar Pradesh, India November 3, 2013**

The accused are part of the Bawaria nomad community, which is also historically and culturally implicated in the hunting and trafficking of wild animals (See « On the Trail » n°2, feline section). Vakil, alias Kala Bawaria is the leader. According to tradition, the poachers ate the heart and the liver of the tigress in the forest of Pilibhit. The hide was found in the neighboring state Uttarakhand in Haldwani. The NGOs WSPI, Effect and Eye of the Tiger cooperated in the investigation.



**Arrest of a presumed tiger poacher**  
**Biruhali, Madhya Pradesh, India**  
**November 20, 2013**

According to an official press release, Keru was arrested by night 15 km from Katni. He pretended to be named Baburao, Gowind, or even Makhan. He looks exactly like the photos in the records, except that he gained some weight and wears a mustache and long hair. He has been wanted since 2009 after the seizure of a shipment of hides and tiger bones worth US\$ 80,000. He was released after paying bail. His involvement in the traffic of tigers was confirmed by witnesses of his associates. His brother, Ajit is already in prison.

Events took a dramatic turn, 6 days later the "big catch" turned out to be a misunderstanding. Keru is still free. The error came from poor coordination between Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra services and the resemblance between the real and the fake Keru. The worst is that according to the press and the public rumors, the real Keru had been in the area.

**Arrest of a tiger skin trafficker**  
**Samalkha, Haryana, India**  
**November 21, 2013**

Dalbir Bawaria is physically handicapped. He could not directly participate in poaching activities. He had been designated by Sarju as the collector and transporter of the loot. According to his own words, Dalbir usually participates in the supply duties of poaching camps near Sevagram in Maharashtra, where Mahatma Gandhi lived. He had, during several months, sent the skins with all of the precautions and every needed kilometer. The "mules" of the tiger bones, hides and claws are chosen with care by the Bawaria and the Baheliya. Disabled people, women, it must also be assured that children and elderly do not partake in this vital role in trafficking.

**Arrest of 3 tiger poachers**  
**Golukonda, Andhra Pradesh, India**  
**December 15, 2013**

At daybreak, the Forest and wild fauna police arrested Ranjit Bawaria and 2 of his accomplices. The operation took place near the Nagpur train station. After the fiasco of appeal of the presumed Keru, the authorities were greedy for information on the Ranjit case. It was known that he worked hand in hand with Dalbir Bawaria and that he was implicated in the death of tigers at Akot, Sevagram and the Melghat reserve. Ranjit is in a business relationship with another notorious trafficker of tiger and panther hides, and crocodile skin named Sansarchand (see « On the Trail » n°2 Feline section – August 2013) who is currently in prison at Tihar, near New Dehli.



**Seizure of 2 tiger skins and one skeleton**  
**Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand, India**  
**December 16, 2013**

The 12 wandering poachers were intercepted when they were about to reach Dehli by train and bus with the skins, the heads and the bones of the 2 tiger. Total value of the "merchandise" is evaluated at Rs 20 lakh (US\$ 32,000). After the discovery of the 2 carcasses December 14, an intervention team was specially organized uniting the local police and forest guards. It was a matter of urgency, as there are only 12 remaining tigers in the reserve.

**Seizure of 15 tiger claws and 2 canines**  
**Hanur, State of Karnataka, India**  
**December 27, 2013**

A Baheliyan group of 10 people arriving in Kollegal under the usual disguise of plastic trinkets sellers will no longer cause any harm to tigers. They were in possession of 15 tiger claws, 2 canines and Rs 200,000 (3,231 US \$). Investigators believe that the animal and cash loot were an «advance» granted by their backers.

The investigation of the case revealed that the recent financial transactions on the ICICI bank account - Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India – of the band amounts to 6.5 Rs 7.5 million (US\$ 105,023 to 121,181). The hunter-trappers planned to clean out the forests of Karnataka near the state of Tamil Nadu. The operation was launched under the NTCA (Natural Tiger Conservation Authority) previously subjected to criticism because of its inertia.

**Poaching of one Bengal Tiger**  
**Near Nagarhole tiger reserve, State of Karnataka, India**  
**December 2013**

The 6 year old female was found in a water drain of the Taraka dam.



## **Seizure of 2 pots of tiger bone glue, a tiger fur coat and other parts**

**Province of Ha Tinh, Vietnam**

**November 7, 2013**

He was arrested in the process of preparing Bengale tiger bone glue at home. Other tiger "derivatives" and an antelope head were stored in the refrigerator. This discovery is the result of investigations on tiger meat trade in the area. Tiger bone glue is used in traditional Asian medicine. It is credited without any scientific evidence of benefic effects against male impotence and... bone diseases. Genuine tiger bone glue is sold US\$ 948 per 100 mg.



## **Seizure of a Bengal tiger skin**

**Kunming, Yunnan Province, China**

**December 10, 2013**

The Bengal tiger skin was hidden under the floor carpet of the car. It weighs 2.5 kg and measures about 90 cm long. The tail was missing.

## **Seizure of 9kg of tiger bone and the skin of a Bengal tiger**

**Nijgadh, Central Development Region, Nepal**

**December 13, 2013**

There are still some tigers in Nepal. The 9 kilos of bones and fur could have come from the tigers from the Parsa sanctuary near the Indian border. Nepal is a transit country for tiger hides and other byproducts from wild fauna to China.

# **Bears**

## **AMERICA**

### **Sentencing of a man for poaching of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) Smithfield, Pennsylvania State, United States October 7, 2013**

The hunter's license was suspended for 5 years after the skin and paws of the bear were found in his garden. The head had been found in a nearby stream and the meat was in a friend's freezer. The case dates back to September 2012. The judgment started on October 7, 2013 sentences him to one year probation and US\$ 1,500 in restitution to be paid to the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

## **FAMILY AFFAIRS - OPERATION BRUIN**

### **Sentencing for unlawful possession and import of a kodiak bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) Province of Alberta, Canada October 16, 2013**

John Whitmarsh, a Canadian hunter, received a CAN\$ 15,000 (€10,400) fine and a 2 year ban from hunting outside of Alberta. The bear trophy and fur were seized. They were the outcome of a hunting party in Alaska. Another member of the family was already sentenced in March 2013 to a CAN\$ 4,000 fine (€2,800) for the same charges.

These sentences follow the operation "Bruin" led jointly by Canada and the United States after the authority in charge of wild fauna protection in Alaska noticed a flow of hunters coming from the Canadian province of Alberta. 6 kodiak bears, 2 black bears, birds protected under international conventions including the Convention on the Protection of Migratory Birds in Canada and the United States signed in 1916 were all found stuffed in the Canadian hunters' homes. 3 local residents including a professional guide are being prosecuted in Alaska. The main part of the fine is turned over to the Environmental Damages Fund (EDF). The Canadian Environmental Ministry has put in place service enabling all to stay informed on all legal rules including laws concerning the import of products of hunting.



**2 people sentenced for buying American black bear parts (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)**

**Helena, State of Montana, Etats-Unis**

**November 25, 2013**

Here is one more example of the persistence of Chinese customs and traditions outside China. The couple running a restaurant called New Hunan took part in bear part trafficking. Bye bye to the Himalayan bear and the Eastern Siberian Russia bear, hello to the black and brown bears of the North American continent. Bear meat and paws were served for a select clientele, gallbladders for the sexually frustrated and victims of various little aches and pains. All this stocked in the freezer and food shelves of the New Hunan and at couple's home. Mrs Huang claimed to treat her arthritis of the hip with the gallbladders. The couple was sentenced to pay a fine of US\$ 9,600 fine, with a remission of US\$ 5,000. Mr Huang was also sentenced for trafficking hunting licences with a fine of US\$ 6,000 and was prohibited from hunting for 6 years. The couple pleaded guilty.

**GOOD NEWS**

**Seizure of a live American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)**

**State of Chihuahua, Mexico**

**November 2013**

The specimen was found captive in a ranch. It was released in the protected natural area of Campo Verde (Chihuahua) in a forest area favorable to the species. American black bears are considered endangered by the NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010.

The protected area of Campo Verde is home to black bear, white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III in Guatemala), puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II) ...



**Poaching of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)**

**State of Virginia, United States**

**December 2013**

The bear was found by the side of a busy road, decapitated and with his paws cut off. He was shot the week-end before the start of the official 5 days when hunting is allowed even if strictly controlled. Hunters must be registered and turn over a pre-molar of catches to authorities managing the bear population. The massacre was made known by a woman who wishes to remain anonymous.

**Sentencing for poaching and sale of bear parts (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)**

**El Dorado, California State, United States**

**December 2013**

2 men were arrested in April 2013 inside the El Dorado National Forest in possession of 20 bear claws and 3 bear gallbladders. They had killed a mother and her 2 cubs. The poachers/butchers had taken the claws, livers and gallbladders. They were sentenced to US\$ 12,500 and a US\$ 5,000 fine. They will spend 30 days in prison followed by 36 months probation. Californian law bans at all times hunting cubs and female bears with their young.

**5 months prison sentence for poaching a grizzly bear and a bear cub (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II)**

**Hinton, Province of Alberta, Canada**

**December 2013**

The bear's head and claws were in the garage. The next day, the decapitated mother bear and dead bear cub were found by the river. The case dates back to October 2010. 3 years later, the Edmonton hunter, age 52, was sentenced to a 5 month prison term and CAN\$10,000 fine (US\$ 9,554). If you witness illegal fishing or hunting activity in the Province of Alberta, you can contact the specialized number available 24/7: 1-800-642-3800.

**ASIA**

**Seizure of 76 bear paws (*Ursidae* family)**

**Fangchenggang, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China**

**December 12, 2013**

The paws were hidden under the floor of the truck. The driver fled from the scene.





**Saisie de 10 pattes d'ours (famille Ursidae, Annexe I ou II)**

**Seizure of 10 bear paws (family Ursidae, Appendix I and II)**

**District of Sindhupalchok, Central Region, Nepal  
December 20 2013**

It's not easy to walk with bear paws hidden in your shoes and under your coat. Kerplunk! His stride puzzled the police. He was travelling on the famous route Araniko close to Tibet. BabuKaji Thapa, 27 said he was «recruited» by a Tibetan to smuggle the paws. If he had not been seen and therefore caught, he would have received around U.S. \$ 100 to 150 (Rs 10,000-15,000).

**Seizure of a bear**

**Vietnam**

**December 2013**

Thumbs up, the bear was killed. Where is the bile? ENV is investigating.

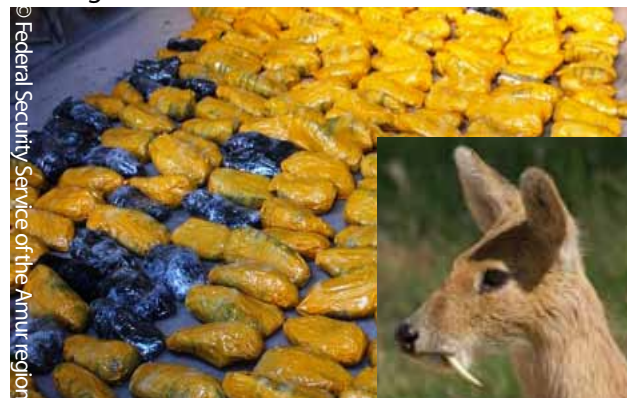


## EUROPE

**Seizure of 450 kg of bear paws (genus *Ursus*), a gallbladder and a preputial gland of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II)**  
**Blagoveshchensk, Economical region of Far Eastern Russia**

**November 6, 2013**

The bear paws were discovered in a garage close to the Chinese border. The bear paws are eaten in China where the average price reaches US\$ 800 per kg compared to US\$ 60 in Russia. Preputial gland of the musk deer secretes a musky oil used in perfumery. Farms are reported in China. The Siberian musk deers have poor resistance to captivity. 450 males produce about 6 kg of musk oil per year according to the NGO Traffic.



A male *Moschus moschiferus*

## Zebras

### AFRICA

**Seizure of 20 kg of Grevy's zebra's meat (*Equus grevyi*, Appendix I)**

**Trans Mara District, County of Narok, Kenya**

**December 31, 2013**

She presented herself as the sole breadwinner for the family. She did not know it was illegal to sell Grevy's zebra bushmeat. She was sentenced to Sh 10,000 (US \$ 117) or 6 months imprisonment if she does not pay the fine. The judge underlined the major role of wildlife for tourism.



## Hippopotamuses

### AFRICA

**Seizure of hippopotamus teeth (family Hippopotamidae, Appendix II) and 2 crocodile skins (genus *Crocodylus*)**

**Garoua, Region of North, Cameroon**

**November 2013**

The crocodile skins and the hippo-potamus (which literally means river horse) teeth were part of an animal bric-a-brac. Their jaws carry large cylinder incisors. Hippo teeth ivory- 7 kg for an adult- is more and more sought after. Hippopotamus teeth are being used to make up for elephant ivory shortage. Protectors of the pacific herbivore have good reason to be worried.



# Rhinoceroses

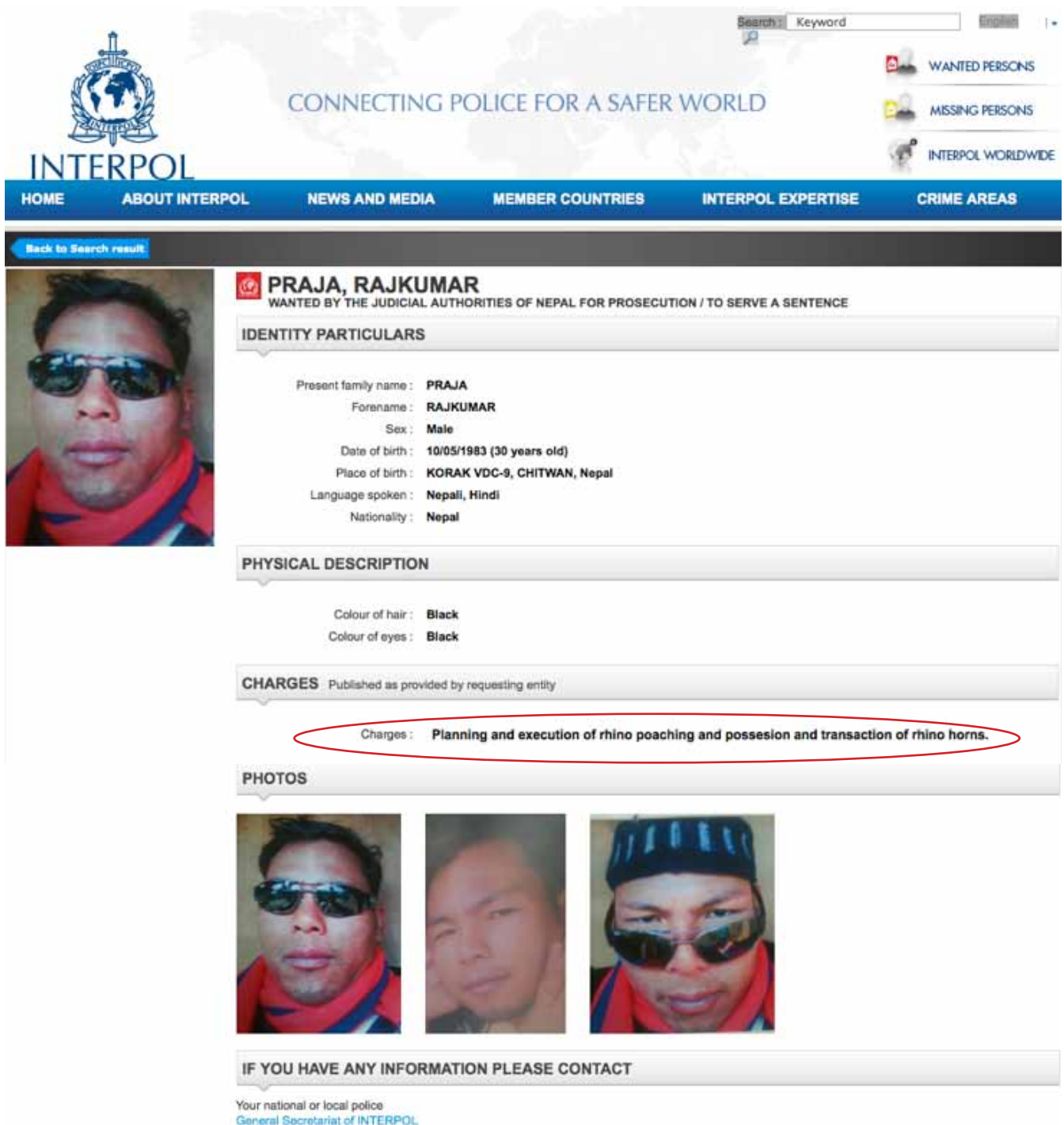
The white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* ranging in Africa are listed in Appendix I, except for the white rhinoceros populations of Swaziland and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies.

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: *Rhinoceros unicornis*, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

1004 rhinoceros killed  
in South Africa in 2013

## GANG. Warrant against a rhino poacher. Nepal. December 2013

An international arrest warrant was issued by Interpol at the request of the Government of Nepal concerning 30 year old Rajkumar Praja, a member of a gang of 13 poachers of rhinos in the Chitwan National Park. He has been sentenced, in absentia, to 15 years in prison.



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**PRAJA, RAJKUMAR**  
WANTED BY THE JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES OF NEPAL FOR PROSECUTION / TO SERVE A SENTENCE

**IDENTITY PARTICULARS**

Present family name: **PRAJA**  
Forename: **RAJKUMAR**  
Sex: **Male**  
Date of birth: **10/05/1983 (30 years old)**  
Place of birth: **KORAK VDC-9, CHITWAN, Nepal**  
Language spoken: **Nepali, Hindi**  
Nationality: **Nepal**

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Colour of hair: **Black**  
Colour of eyes: **Black**

**CHARGES** Published as provided by requesting entity

Charges: **Planning and execution of rhino poaching and possession and transaction of rhino horns.**

**PHOTOS**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT**

Your national or local police  
General Secretariat of INTERPOL

This extract of the Red Notice has been approved for public dissemination



## AFRICA

### Arrest of 5 poachers

**Phalaborwa, Limpopo, South Africa**

**October 1, 2013**

An informant led to the arrest of poachers. 3 of them were South African, and the other 2 were from Mozambique. They had planned to get into the Kruger National Park via the entrance at Phalaborwa to poach rhinos. The police cornered them in the parking lot of a shopping center in the city. A hunting rifle with a silencer, 8 rounds of live ammunition, a butcher knife, an axe, and a vehicle were all confiscated. In South Africa, conspiracy to poach rhinos is a crime.



### 2 poachers arrested

**Thula Thula Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**October 11, 2013**

3 men broke into the reserve. 2 of them were arrested by security agents, the third escaped. A gun, an axe, a machete, and several knives were found in their possession. They are suspected of conspiring to poach 2 rhinos in the reserve even though the rhinos are under 24/7 hour surveillance.

### Arrest of 4 men suspected of poaching

**Mbazwana, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**October 13, 2013**

Police, after receiving information about the presence of poachers in their area, spotted and stopped a Mazda pickup. A thorough search of the vehicle revealed a dismantled rifle hidden under the car near the fuel tank. 4 men, 2 of whom are from Mozambique, were arrested and are charged for illegal possession of unlicensed firearms. They are suspected of attempted poaching. They will appear before the Court of Ubombo.

### Poaching of a female white rhino

**Koffyalaagte Private Game Reserve, Province of Eastern Cape, South Africa**

**October 19, 2013**

A white rhino was killed, and another seriously injured, at the private game reserve.

### One rhino poached

**Askari Lodge, Province of Gauteng, South Africa.**

**October 23, 2013**

A pregnant female rhino was found dead, her horn removed.

### Arrest of 2 men suspected of rhino poaching

**Hluhluwe-Umfolozi National Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**October 30, 2013**

A suspect, allegedly a specialist in rhino poaching, and his sidekick were questioned in Hluhluwe-Umfolozi National Park. The provincial authorities say that « local communities become the eyes and ears of Ezemvelo (Management Authority of wildlife). » Residents were puzzled by the behavior of 2 suspects. In the Umfolozi Park, tourists and poachers can both benefit, each in their own way, from the Big Five (lions, elephants, buffalos, leopards, and rhinos).

### Seizure of 2 rhinoceros horns, a shotgun and 12 live rounds of ammunition

**Kanyamazane, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

**October 2013**

During a night routine control, police arrested a 23 year old man and carried out the seizures. 4 people were able to escape. The rhino is thought to have been shot the night before. 4 days later the police raided a house and arrested 2 individuals aged 25 to 36 years, suspected of having fled at the time of the initial arrest.

### Court appearance of 2 women for conspiracy of rhino poaching

**Ladysmith Regional Court, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**October 2013**

They are 22 years old and had a horn buyer in Gauteng. All they needed was a hunter. They provided him with a .303 hunting rifle fitted with a telescopic sight. They didn't suspect that this rhino killer was actually an undercover cop. They were arrested. Their target was a horned individual living in Umsuluzi Wildlife Reserve on the R74 road. That was in April of this year. The October trial has been delayed. One of the women did not present herself but submitted a medical certificate stating she was ill. Their lawyer withdrew from the case due to non-payment. Anything goes when it comes to stalling the course of justice. Profitting from this case, KwaZulu-Natal «wildlife» spokesman expressed his belief in the experimental injection of a colored and indelible mixture into rhino horns, supposedly harmless to the rhinos. At the current rate, the statistics are clear: African rhinos will be extinct by 2026 according to predictions by the Zululand Wildlife Forum.

### **Court hearing for 2 men suspected of rhino poaching**

**Groblersdal, Province of Limpopo, South Africa  
November 4, 2013**

Since the beginning of the year 2013, 800 rhinos have been killed in South Africa. The arrest of 5 suspects divided into 2 cars surely avoided more massacres. The roadblock put a stop to their trip to the Marble Hall reserve. With a gun and a silencer, ammunition and an axe, they certainly weren't ordinary tourists.

### **5 poachers arrested**

**Thula Thula Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
November 5, 2013**

A sixth poacher was killed during the crossfire. One ranger and one of the arrested poachers were wounded. Authorities found a .303 caliber rifle on the premises. The rhinos are safe and sound.



### **Poaching of 2 rhinos**

**Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, County of Isiolo, Kenya  
November 17, 2013**

By the light of the full moon poachers entered one of the most well kept reserves to kill a 17 year old female black rhino and her 2 year old calf. The horns were cut and the poachers disappeared with them. At Lewa Wildlife Conservancy over 60 rhinos are guarded 24/7 by a team of professionals. 150 armed rangers and guard dog handlers patrol with their bloodhounds along the 150 km of electrified fencing. The reserve also has aerial monitoring equipment to observe the animals and track potential poachers. The intrusion of poachers into a site as well kept as a nuclear power plant requires excellent organization and good knowledge of the premises. The sanctuary is home to the "Big five" and the Grévy's zebra. For very different reasons the reserve was under the spotlight on October 19, 2013, when William Prince of Wales and Catherine Middleton traveled just before the announcement of their wedding.



### **Arrest of 3 men suspected of rhinoceros poaching**

**Kruger National Park, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

**November 19, 2013**

Rangers seized poaching material and an axe. They are searching for a firearm. Since the beginning of 2013, Kruger Park has lost 500 rhinoceros.

### **Sentence to 10 years of prison for 2 poachers of a black rhinoceros**

**Vryheid, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
November 21, 2013**

They were arrested in possession of 2 horns on their return trip heading towards Johannesburg. The arrest was made thanks to the sharing of information from the community and services inspecting environmental crimes and frauds.

### **Poaching of 2 rhinos**

**Kruger National Park, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**

**November 27, 2013**

They were shot near Letaba Restcamp, in the center of the park. The Rangers and the anti-poaching brigade intervened rapidly. They immediately started tracking the footprints and traces. Since the beginning of the year in South Africa 891 rhinos have been poached, that is 223 more than during the whole of 2012 and 443 more than in 2011.

### **Poaching of 2 white rhinos**

**Matopos National Park, Province of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**

**November 2013**

The Matopos Hills dominate the granite shield that covers most of Zimbabwe country. Registered since 2003 in UNESCO World Heritage, they are famous for the largest concentration of rock art in Southern Africa. They now report a less prestigious event: the death and mutilation of 2 white rhinos.



Rock art in Nswatugi Cave,  
Matopos National Park



**2 white rhinos poached**  
**Nwanedi Provincial Park, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**  
**November 2013**

After finding 2 white rhino carcasses, one of which had both horns cut, park officials decided to transport the last surviving rhino to a safer place. The transfer took place in the highest secrecy. The reserve counted 6 rhinos at the beginning of the year. In June, a mother rhino was killed her one month calf was found, stunned and curled up against his mother's body. He was placed in a specialized orphanage.

**Poaching of a rhinoceros**  
**Ol-Pajeta Sanctuary, Laikipia County, Kenya**  
**November 2013**

The Ol-Pajeta Sanctuary shelters around 100 rhinoceros.

**Poaching of a white rhino**  
**Mkhuze game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**  
**November 2013**

The carcass from which the horn had been removed was found 3 to 4 days after the killing. This brings the total to 80 rhinos in KwaZulu-Natal to have been slaughtered this year.

**Sentencing to 6 years prison term for attempted poaching of a rhino**  
**Makhado, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**  
**Decembre 2, 2013**

A young man from Mozambique and his 2 accomplices had been spotted last October by rangers while roaming in Kruger Park. A stroll that was in no way peaceful. The trio was armed. There was crossfire. One poacher escaped, another was killed. The last was arrested. He has just been sentenced for attempted rhino poaching, illegal possession of firearms and illegal entry into the National Park. Rhino defenders believe that the heavier the penalty, the more they deter potential offenders and benefit wildlife. In this case, rhino defenders appreciated that bail before trial was refused.

**Court hearing for a man suspected of rhino poaching**  
**Hoopstad, Province of Free State, South Africa**  
**Decembre 3, 2013**

The unit in charge of fighting rhino poaching was on a routine patrol in the Sandveld Natural Reserve when they fell nose to nose with a group of 3 with quite opposite intentions. A fight broke out. One suspect died. A high caliber rifles (A.375), a silencer, an assortment of machetes and axes and ammunition were found on site. This is the fourth rhino to be poached in the province of Free State since the beginning of the year. The reservation covers 37,000 ha.

**Repentance of a rhino poacher**  
**County of Isiolo, Kenya**  
**December 29, 2013**

Should we believe it? Kelechi Parkusaa, 39 years old, a star of poaching, confessed to killing 2 white rhinos in the Lewa park sanctuary. «On the Trail» suggested that Lewa shooters on 17 November 2013 had probably benefited from insider tips. Even worse: Kelechi Parkusaa was a ranger by day and a rhino killer by night! Before admitting his crimes, the horn thief confessed to the old sages of the Raparua local community and to prove his sincerity, he laid down his arms and ammunition. Hopefully he handed them over reliable hands.



© Joseph Kanyo

**One white rhino poached**  
**Solio Ranch, County of Nyeri, Kenya**  
**December 30, 2013**

The poachers broke through the fencing. They used the quietest weapon. Guards didn't hear anything. The arrow was poisoned. The white rhino was 6 years old.



© Rhino Watch Safari Lodge

Solio Ranch

**Poaching of 3 white rhinos**  
**iSimangaliso Wetland Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**  
**December 2013**

The couple with their baby rhino was shot dead.

**One rhino poached**  
**Gravelotte, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**  
**December 2013**

Bullets are flying also in Gravelotte in South Africa. This is the 947<sup>th</sup> rhino killed in 2013.

**2 rhinos poached**  
**Dorset, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**  
**December 2013**

The death toll up to December in South Africa is 953 victims and at the end of the year it will total 1,004.

# Pollution in Kruger Park

The rupture of a tailing dam containing liquid waste from a phosphate mine, on December 28, 2013, caused a surge of acid and toxic sludge to flow into the Selati River a tributary of the Olifants River (Elephant River) which flows into the Limpopo River which in turn drains into the Indian Ocean from Mozambique. Over a distance of at least 15 km, a massive fish die-off was discovered by the Park Rangers, temporarily diverted from guarding the rhinoceroses. Veterinary services are concerned about the direct and indirect impacts of the pollution on crocodiles that feed on the dying or dead fish and the hippopotamuses that splash around and graze on grass in the river and adjacent marshes. Birds could also be impacted by the pollution of the Park and the entire trophic web. The decomposition of the dead fish, mammals, birds and reptiles could also, in the mid-term, modify the water quality and provoke the outbreak of toxic algae such as cyanobacteria. Downstream drinking water sourced from Olifants River, and used to provide water for tourists and staff in the Park, was suspended. According to the mine owners the dam overflow was caused by exceptionally heavy rains whereas other sources point at the poor maintenance of the facilities.



Bosveld phosphate mine in Phalaborwa



Olifants River (Elephant River)

## AMERICA

### OPERATION CRASH 1/3

**Court appearance of Mr. M. Slattery Jr. accused of trafficking rhino horns  
Brooklyn, State of New York, United States  
November 5, 2013**

Michael Slattery Jr, 23 years old and of Irish nationality, part of the Rathkeale Rovers network (see « On the Trail » n°2) is in prison in Brooklyn. He risks a 5 year prison sentence. He carried out several purchases and sales of rhino horns in the United States. Under the Endangered Species Act Slattery and his front men were not entitled to sell, exchange or trade in any other State than the one of origin or abroad. This restriction applied to the stuffed rhino head bought in Austin, Texas which he sold in Flushing, New York where the "antique" dealer of Chinese origin lives, who is also in prison for horn trafficking and for libation cups. Slattery would provide fake certificates with the official US Fish and Wildlife Service stamp. The arrest of the Kha clan (see « On the Trail » n°1), of the Chinese antique dealer and of Michael Slattery Jr. are credited to operation Crash launched 2 years ago in the United States to fight rhino horn trafficking.

### Indictment for trafficking a black rhino trophy and use of a fraudulent document

**State of New Hampshire, United States  
November 2013**

Ari B. Goldenberg, 46 years old, attempted to sell a black rhino piece for US\$ 35,000 along with a fake certificate. The buyer was an agent of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. M. Goldenberg had illegally purchased the rhino head with its horns for US\$ 1,000.

### OPERATION CRASH 2/3

Mr. Wang sentenced to a 37 month prison term for trafficking objects made of rhino horn and ivory  
New York, State of New York, United States  
December 5, 2013

The antique dealer is accused of having illegally exported libation cups made of rhino horn and carved ivory towards China. To drink from a libation cup would ensure good health. Collectors are avid for antique cups. Such enthusiasm generated a counterfeit market with cups made from recently killed rhinos. On Mr. Wang's computer in his home in Flushing, New York, pictures of raw and carved horns, messages concerning transactions and instructions were considered proof of his involvement.



Mr. Wang pleaded guilty. The prison term will be followed by 3 years probation. The New York "antique dealer's" arrest is one of the outcomes of Operation Crash launched in the US to eradicate rhino horn trade and particularly to weaken the Rathkeale Rovers' activities (See « On the Trail » n°2). The story is far from over. Operation Crash will feature again with the arrest of a colleague of Mr. Wang.

### **OPERATION CRASH 3/3**

#### **Court appearance of Mr. Li for smuggling rhino horns and elephant ivory Newark, State of New Jersey, United States December 19, 2013**

Zhifei Li, another antique dealer, admitted before an American Court to being the organizer of a network which illegally exported towards China 30 rhino horns and carved ivory estimated to be worth U.S\$ 4.5 million. Mr. Li admitted sending, on 2 occasions, to China rhino horns intact or cut into pieces and placed into porcelain vases or sent in separate parcels after meticulously wrapping them in duct tape.

Mr. Li used the same ploy to export from the United States to China 2 elephant tusks weighing 50kg mislabeling them as «automobile parts» and 60 carved and sculpted ivory pieces.

Mr. Li was caught at an antique show in Miami when he bought 2 black rhinoceros horns for U.S\$ 59,000 from a man who was in fact an undercover agent from Operation Crash and to whom Mr. Li stated that he would be happy to buy new horns and if it was possible to send them directly to Hong Kong without going through his hands or the usual circles. Mr. Li's rhino horns were shipped to Hong Kong where they were carved «to make as old» into fake antique ceremonial libation cups which cost a fortune.

## **ASIA**

#### **Poaching of one male rhino Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India October 7, 2013**

One more hard blow at the Kaziranga National Park. The rhino was shot down in the Agoratoli area. It was raining. It happened at night. The tragedy took place on the Brahmapoutre riverbank, 2 km away from a guard's camp. They didn't hear the gun shots. The body was found the next morning during routine patrols. This is the 22nd rhino killed this year in the park.

#### **Poaching of one rhino Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Assam, India October 8, 2013**

Having heard 7 gun shots, guards intervened rapidly on site. It was 6 p.m. The poachers did not have the time to take the horn. At least 4 poachers are involved. 2 of them were arrested. One of them is

thought to have welcomed into his home members of the Naga community known for their ancestral hunting skills.

#### **Seizure of the horn of an Indian one-horned rhino Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India. October 24, 2013**

35 rhinos killed in the Kaziranga National Park since the beginning of 2013. The last was shot down near the express route 37. The villains didn't have time to saw off the horn. Bullet proof jackets and AK 47 cartridges were found on the scene.

#### **Poaching of rhinos Manas National Park, State of Assam, India October 29, 2013**

Indian Rhino Vision 2020, the program supported by the WWF to transport rhinos to India, is in trouble. The Manas National Park has just lost its sixth rhino to a violent death. A poacher was killed in the pursuit. An agent of the park is suspected of having provided the poachers with information on the rhinos' location. Local WWF agents have deserted this terrain considering the park too unstable and dangerous.

#### **GANG Seizure of a rhinoceros horn and small parts of another horn Sivasagar, Assam, India October 31, 2013**

Police arrested 2 members of a gang of rhino horn dealers. The seized horn weighs 1.35 kilograms, and measures more than 20 cm. It is estimated on the black market at Rs 45 lakh (US\$ 73,484). To begin, the 2 suspects were put in custody for 48 hours.

#### **Arrest of 3 suspected rhino poachers Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India October 2013**

A carcass was found by guards during a routine patrol. The animal was killed and dehorned by night. 3 suspects were arrested. The discovery took place on the day of the reopening of the park after 4 months of monsoon.

#### **Rhino Poaching Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, State of Assam, India November 2, 2013**

The rhino population in the park is about one hundred individuals. During Divali celebrations, guards know that risks are significant. Firecrackers can mask gunshots. This is the first victim of the year in the 80 km<sup>2</sup> of the park.

## **Poaching of 2 rhinos**

**Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, State of Assam, India**

**November 9, 2013**

The female rhino and her calf were killed near the Brahmaputra River. Late in the evening, forest guards heard shots but the poachers managed to take the horns and escape. 4 cartridges of .303 caliber were found. Guards say that in winter it is hard to intervene in time because of heavy fog therefore facilitating poachers' intrusions.

The Aranya Surakshya Samiti NGO has asked that the army be called upon to protect the park from pillage. In protest, they organized along with other local organizations a demonstration that took place on the highway bordering the park.

This NGO was founded in 1996. Its aim is to fight poaching in the Orang forest reserve. The NGO's activities have broadened to the protection of the environment, the struggle against deforestation and corruption, and awareness programs.



**Poaching of one rhino**

**Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India**

**November 24, 2013**

The 38<sup>th</sup> rhino killed since the beginning of 2013 has just been found by a forest guard patrol. The horn, ears and pieces of leather were taken from the body.

**Seizure of one kilogram of rhino horns**

**Province of Binh Phuoc, Region of Southeast, Vietnam**

**November 27, 2013**

An informant warned Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV) that a so-called specialist in Chinese traditional medicine was attempting to sell a rhino horn. The police was warned and they arrested the conman. Tests are in process to confirm authenticity of the horn.

**Arrest of 3 poachers**

**Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, State of Assam, India**

**November 29, 2013**

The attempted poaching was prevented. The main suspect Nurul Islam is well known by the National Park's surveillance teams had been seen the night before in a nearby restaurant. The team followed the suspects until the middle of the night at the home of one of his accomplices, Isuf Ali, where 2 shotguns .303 calibre and 52 rounds of ammunition were seized. The trio apparently intended to break into the park in the early morning.

**Seizure of 4 boxes of ivory and 3.4 kg of rhino horn**

**Province of Bac Giang, Region of Northeast, Vietnam**

**November 2013**

The police intercepted a taxi and found 4 boxes of chopsticks and other items thought to be made of ivory and 3.4 kg of suspected rhino horns. The passengers were put in custody pending the outcome of the identification of seizures by specialists. Police acted on confidential informations.

**Seizure of a rhino horn**

**Jalukbari, State of Assam, India**

**December 2013**

Police arrested the man in possession of a rhino horn weighing about 1kg. He was trying to sell it. 1kg of rhino horn can be sold up to US\$ 55,000. The suspect is employed by health services in the Gola-ghat District.

**Poaching of a rhinoceros**

**Manas National Park, Assam, India**

**December 31, 2013**

The animal was slaughtered in the center of the Park. The poaching could have been committed with the help of someone on the inside. It was a 13 year old female named Giribala who was slaughtered by machine gun. She left behind an orphan of 9 months. She had been transferred from the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary to the Manas Park in 2011. 18 rhinoceros have already been transferred to Manas Park. The Indian Rhino Vision 2020 that plans the reintroduction of rhinoceros into the park is more and more a menace!



Giribala



## EUROPE

### **Sentencing to 10 months prison for stealing rhino horn replicas**

**London, England, United Kingdom**

**December 6, 2013**

Events date back to August 2011. After breaking into the Tring National History museum at night, the man broke the glass pane to take the rhino horns. What he didn't know is that, 2 months earlier and after a series of thefts in other museums in England and Europe, museum personnel had exchanged the real horns with copies made with resin. The fake stealer was sentenced to a real prison term to the museum director's satisfaction: "The rhino specimens have a real cultural and scientific value." "Each of the specimens in our scientific collection is as unique and irreplaceable as a work of art."

### **Seizure of 2 rhinoceros horns (6.77kg) and Bears' bile**

**Prague Václav Havel Airport, Czech Republic**

**Late December 2013**

The 2 rhino horns and dried bear bile were hidden amongst fake electrical devices in a cylinder spool which should have been wound with metal coils. Czech custom officers discovered the contraband following an x-ray inspection of the parcel. In fact the horns were patiently and meticulously hidden under layers of resin, plastic wrap and tar. The total value of the smuggled items destined for Vietnam is U.S. \$ 360,000 or U.S. \$ 53,000 per kilo.



# Elephants

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

**The seizure of ivory  
from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>th</sup> December is equal to  
1,890 éléphants**

Taking the average weight of 4.5 kg per tusk.  
The 476 seized ivory articles of which the weight was  
not communicated have not been included in the total.



## Cyanide channel, continued from « On the Trail » n°2

**Zimbabwe.** The official death toll stands at one hundred elephants poisoned. The Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force (ZCTF) gives the figure of 300 elephants. This amount is based on a detailed testimony, gathered from a European hunter who flew over Hwange Park by helicopter once, and then went through in a four-wheel-drive car. The Government has not formally denied these estimates. The park is now closed to the public. The army provides a strong presence in the park. Elephant carcasses and other animals were burned in the open air, a practice that does not guarantee the elimination of cyanide. Tusks were found buried along a railway track that crosses the park. In early October, 11 more poisoned elephant carcasses and dead vultures were discovered in the Hwange Park at Guvalala, more than 100 km from the initial mass graves. According to the director of the park, this series of deaths come after the summer 2013 poisoning campaign. Initial observations suggest that elephants in Guvalala could have died in mid-September.

The villagers around Hwange Park commonly use cyanide to get rid of animals considered to be pests. A committee in charge of cyanide recovery, headed by several senior ministries, set a deadline end of October 2013 for all villagers to hand in any poison. The reputation of this committee has been compromised by court records. Its director Alphius Msindazi Siphoso, traditional chief of villages bordering the park, was sentenced in 2009 to a fine of US\$ 200, or 2 months imprisonment in case of nonpayment for ivory trafficking. In a troubled atmosphere following the first cyanide scandal, villagers in Tsholotsho abandoned their cyanide by night near elementary schools in Pelandaba and Phelela.

In November 2013, over 70 kg cyanide was seized at the home of a former policeman. He was involved in the poisoning of around 20 elephants in the Lupane Reserve, 50 km east of Hwange Park. Together with his accomplice and 3 villagers they have been sentenced to 4 to 14 years imprisonment for the possession and use of forbidden and toxic substances and ivory traffic.

Each ivory seizure in Zimbabwe, in neighboring countries or in airports in liaison with Harare are a reminder of the cyanide channel.

October 13, 4 tusks were seized aboard a Citiliner bus. They appear to come from 3 different elephants. They were hidden in 3 different baggage compartments of a bus. The 2 bus drivers were arrested. They were sentenced to 4 years in jail with the possibility to exchange this sentence with the payment of a US\$ 790 fine. The bus had just entered into South Africa via the border post Beitbridge coming from Zimbabwe.

On October 21, a 34-year-old Chinese citizen was stopped at Harare International Airport. He was about to board with 113.9 kg of raw and carved ivory.

In November, another Chinese citizen was caught in the same airport with objects made of ivory. He was awaiting departure. He was sentenced to US\$ 150 fine or 20 days in jail for smuggling ivory.

To be continued in the next issue of « On the Trail »...





## AFRICA

### **Seizure of 3 pieces of ivory (7kg)**

**Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

**October 2, 2013**

A veteran soldier of the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), monitored by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) was arrested in Nairobi in possession of 7 kg of ivory. These pieces of ivory were government trophies. The suspect was about to sell them.

### **Seizure of 2 elephant tusks**

**Mau Forest, County of Nakuru, Kenya**

**October 2, 2013**

3 ivory traffickers were arrested by members of the Mara Elephant Project (MEP) and Kenya Wildlife Services. 2 tusks were seized.

### **Seizure of 33.5 kg of ivory**

**Kibwezi, County of Makueni, Kenya**

**October 4, 2013**

Police officers intercepted a car with the help of an informant. The driver refused to respond to police orders. After a chase and a man hunt, 2 suspects were finally arrested in Kibwezi. According to the first elements of this case, the tusks seem to come from the Tsavo East Game Park.



### **Seizure of 29 tusks**

**Mambale, East Region, Cameroon**

**October 4, 2013**

168 kg of ivory was found in the car of Madi, a 28 year old Cameroonian. For 6 months, he smuggled the custom ivory between Republic of the Congo and Nigeria to deliver to a certain Abubakar. He makes US\$ 722 for each journey of which US\$ 200 paid in advance.

### **Arrest of an elephant poaching backer** **Oyem, Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon**

**October 9, 2013**

A Pygmye recruited by an ivory trafficker called Tété explained with good intentions that he finally refused to kill elephants and that he used the shot gun and 6 pieces of ammunition that had been given to him to hunt non protected animals. Tété who was displeased by this breach of contract "beat up" his recruit before taking back the gun and 3 ammunitions left. Tété, whose real names is Bakalé Assembé Téléphone, acknowledged the facts. The Gabonese press insists on the manipulations that Pygmyes are subjected to by traffickers. Tété is facing up to 3 years prison sentence for unlawful possession of rifles and ammunition used specifically for the killing of pachyderms and other large sized protected animals. Investigations were led by judicial police with the help of Forest and Water services, Conservation Justice and the WWF.

### **Seizure of 4 tusks, 2 tails, and several elephant jaws**

**Lomié, East Province, Cameroon**

**October 9, 2013**

In a forceful operation ecoguards supported by a brigade of gendarmes arrested 3 suspects who attempted to sell ivory, 2 tails, and several jaws of elephants. One of the 3 suspects is a retailer and the other 2 are believed to have regularly used motorcycle taxis to carry their loot to the city Lomié. Some motorcycle-taxi drivers who attended the scene tried unsuccessfully to forcefully free 3 of the suspects. Observers see the trade of anatomical parts of the elephant as a consequence of black market ivory. Though the elephant is killed mainly for their tusks, their jaws, tails, legs, trunk, or genitals can be cut and sold for various uses. According to the NGO LAGA, an elephant is killed every 15 minutes on the African continent.



**Poaching of one elephant**  
**Mbuvi, County of Embu, Kenya**  
**October 13, 2013**

The mutilated elephant was found in the forests of Mount Kenya within the National Park.

**Seizure of 3 pieces of ivory**  
**Odzala-Kokoua National Park, Departments of Cuvette-Ouest and Sangha, Congo**  
**October 15, 2013**

Former poachers seeking amnesty, who were officially recruited through the Republic of Congo's new program "poacher-to-protector", now monitor Odzala-Kokoua National Park. Knowledge of this program was spread throughout the region by word of mouth and sending official letters to village leaders. 56 ex-poachers have applied for the positions of ecoguards. 45 were admitted to the official functions of monitors or sworn in guards. 5 candidates for this spectacular conversion acknowledged having «worked» in service to Ghislain Ngondjo, alias Pepito, whose trial was reported in « On the Trail » n°2. Pygmy hunters will be candidates for positions as ecoguards with a new recruitment campaign that will be launched in February 2014. For several years, Odzala-Kokoua Park was not patrolled. Since 2011, African Parks Network, a non-profit organization that rehabilitates and manages national parks in collaboration with governments and local communities, carries out this monitoring. The association has 7 parks in 6 African countries under its responsibility.

Odzala-Kokoua National Park has an area of 13,500 km<sup>2</sup>. It was included on the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites on June 12, 2008.



Parc national d'Odzala-Kokoua

**Seizure of elephant meat and a tail**  
**Matusadona National Park, Province of Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe**  
**October 23, 2013**

The clash and crossfire with rangers resulted in the death of one poacher, while 3 others fled the scene. The rangers recovered firearms, ammunition, 1 kg of elephant meat, one elephant tail, a ladder, a cell phone, 1 kg of maize flour, a pan, a plate, 2 knives, and 1 kg of sugar on site.

**Seizure of an elephant tusk**  
**Shimba Hills National Reserve, County of Kwale, Kenya.**

**October 25, 2013**

2 suspects caught in the field were in possession of poisoned arrows. One of them threatened the reserve rangers with them. In self-defense, the guards fired. One poacher died. The other fled. An elephant tusk was found at the scene.

**Seizure of ivory**  
**Kongola, Zambezi Region, Namibia**  
**October 27, 2013**

The bus was transporting cut parts of ivory tusks. The criminal baggage was unnamed. All the passengers and the driver were mute. No arrest was made. The ivory was seized, investigations continue.

**REPEATED OFFENDER**  
**Court hearing for 3 individuals for poaching and trafficking of elephants**  
**Malengalenga, Caprivi Region, Namibia**  
**October 28, 2013**

The individuals suspected of killing 5 elephants in Malengalenga a week earlier, appeared before the court of Katima Mulilo. One of them was a former police officer and poacher recidivist.

**REPEATED OFFENDER**  
**Charge of a member of the Kenyan Port Authority**  
**Mombasa, County of Mombasa, Kenya**  
**October 2013**

Gideon Naftali Osinyo, former member of the Kenya Ports Authority, is charged for the second time for ivory smuggling. In January 2013, he had already been accused for trafficking attempt of 638 pieces of ivory toward Thailand. With 2 other accomplices, one of which is on the run, he is now charged for export attempt of 1,099 pieces of ivory weighing 1833 kg discovered in December 2012 stashed in a container for Vietnam (see «The port of Mombasa» article in « On the Trail » n°2).

**Seizure of 18 elephant tusks,**  
**Motopi, District Center, Botswana**  
**October 2013**

The Spring Couriers vehicle was stopped for a search following a tip off. The driver had fled, leaving his Zambian passenger in the hands of the police. The driver, however, had forgotten to clean the back of his van and there were enough chips from the elephant tusks to incriminate him. While remaining discreet with the information already gathered, one of the officials in charge of the case revealed that the 3 defendants, including the driver of Sprint Couriers, had buried 18 elephant tusks along the bank of the river at Motopi. This case is part of an upsurge in poaching in the region of Ngamiland where many farmers have recently acquired firearms under the pretense of deterring the theft of cattle. However, these weapons seem to be actually used for poaching.





Boteti River near Motopi

### **Echoes following the arrest of a Reverend for elephant poaching Rwimi, Western Province, Uganda October 2013**

In Uganda the arrest of reverend Baguma, a suspected ivory trafficker, continues to cause much turmoil and comments. Authorities are beginning to talk: "In the Kibali National Park, elephants are killed with AK47s". Holes are dug in the ground. When elephants fall in, they are wounded by sharp pieces of wood. Cyanide has also been used. Tourist agencies are complaining. They sell to international tourists sightseeing travels filled with the vision of fauna in Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls parks and their clients return saying they saw almost nothing. The animals are fewer and more suspicious than before. In Murchison Falls, regression of wild fauna is pushed even further because of oil exploration activities that cause rise in the demand for bush meat.

To better tackle the main flows of contraband, ivory detectors are said to have been put up in the Entebbe airport... See « On the Trail » n°2 page 64.

### **Seizure of 1.9 tons of ivory Kampala, Central Region, Uganda October 2013**

The ivory was among plastic bottles to be recycled. Yes, this isn't the first time recycling is used as a "cover" for shameful trade. The cargo is worth US\$ 2.36 million and cost the lives of over 200 elephants. The container was heading towards Mombasa port, the main hub port for Eastern Africa. Uganda is a transit country for ivory. The truck driver was put in custody along with a man from Kenya whose name was registered as the shipper of the cargo. As often in similar cases in Uganda, an anonymous voice referred to as the conservation fraternity speaks out in the press: "[China is] ruthless when it comes to dealing with anyone poaching their pandas but when it comes to tens of thousands of African elephants, they show no concern at all." "Trade must be halted or in 10 years our elephants will be gone. (...) It is their own fault for being silently complicit to the blood ivory trade that I bring up these issues."



### **Seizure of 116 kg of ivory and 2.5 kg of pangolin scales Entebbe National Airport, Central Region, Uganda October 2013**

The 2 Chinese citizens and 2 Guinea citizens were arrested only a few days apart in the Entebbe National Airport. All 4 are thought to have benefited from complicity among security forces. They were stopped in the departure terminal, on the verge of boarding on a plane to China. They had passed all security checks and control points. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is looking to confirm the link between the 4 traffickers and the recent seizure of 832 pieces of ivory that in this case, were to reach China by sea via Kenya. According to the UWA, part of the ivory comes from Burundi. Tusks were found in a bag marked with the Gaagaa bus company logo, a bus line that travels from Burundi to Uganda. The value of the ivory is estimated at US\$ 178,000, and that of the pangolin scales at US\$ 500. The goods were registered as beauty accessories for women.



**Seizure of 20 kg of ivory  
Mariakani, County of Kilifi, Kenya  
October 2013**

Police officers on patrol arrested 2 Somalis and one Kenyan. In the car there were 7 hidden ivory pieces, whose estimated value is 200,000 shillings (US\$ 2,348).

**Seizure of 473 elephant ivory objects and 3 tusks**

**Wilaya of Algiers, Algeria  
October 2013**

The police arrested an African foreigner during an identity check. He was an illegal immigrant and in possession of objects with suspicious origins. After being transferred to the brigade against trafficking of cultural heritage, the individual admitted to practice ivory trafficking. 473 ivory objects were found at his home. 18 statuettes, 37 rings, 6 chains, 8 pairs of earrings, 28 rods, 176 bracelets, 200 pieces of different sizes and 3 tusks. The man was placed in custody pending trial.

**Seizure of 7 kg of elephant ivory  
Algiers International Airport, Wilaya of Algiers, Algeria  
October 2013**

5 elephant tusks concealed in the luggage of 2 Asian nationals were seized by the same brigade against trafficking of cultural heritage. Both individuals were preparing to fly to their home country. Algerian authorities estimate the price of raw ivory from € 6 to 12 per gram.

**Poaching of 3 elephants  
Taita-Taveta County, Kenya  
October 2013**

Facebook: «Sorry to learn of the recent poaching of another 3 elephants in Taita-Taveta County».

**OPERATION TOKOMEZA**

**Seizure of 1,889 kg of ivory  
Masasi and Dar es Salam, Tanzania  
October 29, November 2 and 4, 2013**

The case was revealed by Operation Tokomeza ("to annihilate" in swahili) supported by the Tanzanian government. Tokomeza aimed at containing ivory trafficking towards China. China is Tanzania's main economical partner and thousands of technicians and workers are partaking in working sites all over the country.

The 706 pieces of ivory equivalent to over 200 live elephants were hidden in the shelter off the house where 3 Chinese expatriates were living their official occupation was to sell garlic stuffed snails. Scales and minibuses were part of their equipment. The minibus had 2 license plates, one for the legal work, the second for night work, the one devoted

to collecting the ivory pieces. During the night trips, the ivory was mixed in bags with the garlic stuffed snails, a strong scent that can confuse sniffer dogs. The 3 suspects declare their only occupation is the food trade and that they had sub-let the facility to "friends" at night.

2 days later, 2 tusks were seized in Dar es Salam, the grand Tanzanian harbor and threshold to China.

Finally, a few days before the «suspension» of Operation Tokomeza, 89 elephant tusks were found in a sedan after a roadside check.

The Tanzanian parliament itself who had published an alarming report on the rapid disappearing of elephants in Tanzania expressed concern in October 2013 of alleged deterring of Operation Tokomeza with arbitrary arrests and violence against nomad farmers. Also, Tokomeza would have apparently "forgotten" the key regions of trafficking at the request of certain influential politicians who drew benefits from elephant poaching. The Tanzanian Minister of natural Resources and Tourism, Mister Khamis Kageskesi, refuted at the time these rumors declaring them orchestrated directly by lords of the ivory traffic and other animal or vegetal products.

Minister Kagasheki who was eventually led to resign in the following days, feared that the premature termination of the anti-smuggling and poaching campaign could cause the dissolution of evidence and paralyse investigations. Besides ivory, thousands m<sup>3</sup> of timber illegally harvested in natural reserves have been seized. In 3 weeks, 397 suspects were arrested, 308 were produced before the court. The human toll of the clashes between the army and the outlaws is officially 5 dead and 11 wounded.

Burial of the Tokomeza Operation has not buried the controversy. According to the new Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Lazaro Nyalandu, the elephants slaughter flared up soon after. «60 elephants have been killed in 2 months while during the 3 weeks of Operation Tokomeza only 2 elephants were killed.»

Since the end of Tokomeza, 5 national parks and reserves have been invaded by poachers. 80 of them have invested the Mkungunero forest and have engaged in a guerilla war with the forest rangers.

The situation is extremely confused. It is legitimate, as the Tanzanian parliament did, to call in all circumstances for respect of human rights and minorities, but in the opposite camp, the ivory smuggling network has no other arguments than savagery and kalashnikovs.

The Tanzanian government, in order to curb the plundering of natural resources and preserve tourism revenues, wants to strengthen partnerships with the European Union, Interpol and... China, the main destination for poached ivory from Tanzania.



**Poaching of an elephant  
Isiolo County, Kenya  
November 9, 2013**

A new victim in Isiolo County was taken by the poachers for its long tusks.

**Seizure of elephant tusks  
County of Samburu, Kenya  
November 10, 2013**

The tusks were worth “several millions of dollars” according to local press. They were found in the forest after being abandoned there by smugglers who thought they were being chased. One suspect was arrested. The Samburu region is known to harbor old tuskers.

**Seizure of an elephant’s carcass and a leopard’s carcass (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I)  
Minkébé National Park, Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon  
November 10-11, 2013**

National park agents arrested 34 illegal gold miners, mainly from Cameroon, in Minkébé Park. One of them was shot during the crossfire. In their camp, agents found the bodies of an elephant and a leopard along with fire arms.

“This is not just a battle to save the African elephant: this is a public security issue and authorities in Gabon take very seriously the extremely brutal methods used by poachers” solemnly declared Lee White, Executive director of the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN).

The Minkébé National Park covers 7,560 km<sup>2</sup>. Gorillas, leopards, pangolins, elephants share this threatened habitat overlooked by trees hundreds of years old. 4 gold-bearing rivers cross Minkébé. Already, in 2011, 6,000 illegal gold miners had been chased from the park.



A group of the arrested gold miners

**Smuggling of 2 tusks  
Republic of the Congo  
November 11, 2013**

A 4x4 vehicle ostensibly carrying 2 enormous elephant tusks was photographed by tourists and posted on Twitter. The members of the Congo Basin Program involving WWF and forest unions which aim is to ensure fair trade in tropical timber are trying to track the vehicle.



**Elephant poaching  
Olposimoru, County of Narok, Kenya  
November 12, 2013**

The elephant was shot near the Masai Mara National Reserve. The village is near the Tanzanian border.



Masai Mara National Reserve

**Seizure of 1,023 pieces of tusks (2,915kg)  
Port of Zanzibar, Archipelago of Zanzibar, Tanzania  
November 13, 2013**

A 40 foot long container in which was hidden 2,915 tons of ivory was seized by Tanzanian police, in the semi-autonomous port of Zanzibar. It was sent from Dar es Salaam. It was bound for China. The chief of police indicated that 6 people, of whom 2 were employers of a clearance agency, are prosecuted. In August 2011, the police had already discovered in Zanzibar 1,041 tusks hidden within a shipment of anchovies bound for Malaysia.

**Poaching of one elephant  
Amboseli National Park, County of Kajiado,  
Kenya**

**November 18, 2013**

The Amboseli trust for Elephants NGO had named the male elephant Stuart. He was 34 years old. He had lived during 18 years with his mother Sadi, a venerable elephant still alive. Usually young elephants leave their mothers, by the latest, at the age of 14. The tusks were found. Stuarts left ear was also cut. A suspect was arrested.



The place of the massacre

**Poaching of one elephant  
Tsavo East National Park, Kenya  
November 23, 2013**

The 2 poachers were sawing the tusks of the elephant freshly killed when they were spotted by an air surveillance patrol of the KWS and Tsavo Trust. The land units, even though immediately informed, were not able to catch the duo. They escaped without taking the time to finish the job.

**Seizure of 30 kg of carved ivory  
Nairobi, County of Nairobi, Kenya  
November 27, 2013**

Thanks to an informant, officers of the Kenya Wildlife Service arrested a person and searched their luggage in front of the Global Cinema in Nairobi. 2 accomplices escaped. They were probably looking for buyers. The arrested person is charged for illegal possession of government trophy, dealing with ivory without a permit and failure to report to authorities being in possession of ivory.

**Seizure of 5 pieces of ivory (15kg)  
Kilima Pesa, County of Narok, Kenya  
November 29, 2013**

One of the 2 accused is a member of the police force. He denies the charges held against him. They were released on a bail of US\$ 5,870 (500,000 shillings) each. The ivory is estimated to be worth US\$ 17,615 (1.5 million shillings).

**Seizure of elephant tusks  
Isiolo, County of Isiolo, Kenya  
November 2013**

A checkpoint set up on the Isiolo-Moyale highway enabled the arrest of 2 people. Officers found tusks, some cut and others packaged in plastic, hidden under the driver's seat. The car was heading towards Nairobi.



Nick named "Chinese road"

**Seizure of elephant parts and crocodile skin  
Makenene, Region of Center, Cameroon  
November 2013**

In the elephant graveyard carried by 2 poacher morticians, there was a tibia, a tail and teeth (not the tusks), all wrapped up in a crocodile skin.

**2 men sentenced to 9 years prison and forced labor for unlawful possession of elephant tusks  
Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe  
November 2013**

The 2 men had been arrested on September 16, 2013 in Greendale in possession of 2 small tusks weighing 1.6 kg. One of them worked in a clinic, the second was finishing his studies at the polytechnic institute of Harare.



Harare Polytechnic



**Seizure of 14 kg of ivory**  
**Aflao Border, Region Maritime, Togo**  
**November 2013**

The Central Office for repression of drug dealing and money laundering (the OCRTIDB) put their hands on 4 people part of an ivory trafficking network that extended to several of Togo's neighboring countries. The first smuggler was caught at the border between Togo and Ghana. He was trying to pass through ivory objects of an estimated weight of 3 kg. Investigations led to the arrest of 3 other people in a sculpting workshop where 11 kg of ivory were seized. The ivory apparently comes from Central Africa. 3 of the suspects are Togolese, the fourth is from Guinea.



**Seizure of 12 kg of ivory**  
**Zimbabwe**  
**November 2013**

The 2 suspects were transporting 12 kg of ivory in a bag of 20kg of corn flour. The trick was discovered soon after the turbulent incursion of the poachers, apparently Zambians, in Zimbabwe. In their basecamp, some kitchen utensils, cooking oil, munitions, clothing, an electric torch...and the corn flour were found.

**8 ivory smugglers arrested**  
**Municipality of Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo**  
**End of November 2013**

In one week, 4 interventions carried out in cooperation by the Ministry of Forests, National Gendarmerie, the English Foundation Aspinall, the Wildlife Conservation Society disturbed the widespread ivory trafficking in Brazzaville.

-One ivory tusk seized.

-2 carved ivory sellers were arrested.

-A Chinese citizen departing on an Ethiopian Airlines flight with luggage filled with ivory jewelry was arrested at the same time as an airport employee who accepted to keep his eyes shut for US\$ 125.

**Seizure of a serpent skin and 2 elephant tusks**  
**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**  
**November 2013**

The accomplices fled and left behind a suspect accompanied by a serpent skin and 2 elephant tusks estimated to be worth US\$ 18,000.

**Arrest of an ivory trafficker**  
**Minvoul, Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon**  
**December 7, 2013**

After weeks on the run, Jean-Philippe Nkaga was arrested in his bar in Minvoul. The ivory trafficker was denounced by 4 poachers in August 2013. He was the owner of the 17kg of ivory seized. He fought back during his arrest. Nkaga is very violent and well known to police services. In 2011 he was involved in poaching activities in the Minkéké Park (Province of Woleu-Ntem). A 5 months prison term was then pronounced against him. Released in 2012, he put together his trafficking network. The modus operandi of his affairs was well established. Jean-Philippe Nkaga "used" pygmies to kill the elephants and to export the ivory tusks through the forest to Cameroon.



**Seizure of 5 tusks**  
**County of Samburu, Kenya**  
**December 10, 2013**

There is still some passion for the elephants from Isiolo. The taxi was traveling by night. His clients were poachers coming back from work. Rangers had set up a check point. The taxi refused to stop. Following the shootout, 2 poachers died. 2 escaped. It's not known what became of the taxi driver. 5 elephant tusks, cell phones, camouflage gear, weapons and ammunition were retrieved after the chase. The gang seems to have doubly specialized: elephants and rhinos. They appear to be responsible for the poaching of 2 rhinos in the Lewa private reservation on November 17, 2013.

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Sentencing for ivory trafficking**  
**Dixinn, Region of Conakry, Guinea**  
**December 18, 2013**

Mamadou Kaba, seller of wooden sculptures on market places had some hidden talents. He was arrested in possession of 43 pieces of jewelry made of ivory, a relatively small but misleading quantity. Kaba would receive a constant flow of supplies from a gross salesman in Benin to reduce financial and judicial risk in case of a seizure of arrest. This preventive measure paid off. Despite grand declarations made by the judge "In historic times, killing

an elephant or a lion was an act of bravery. To capture a chimp and tame him was an entertaining activity. But today, to hold an elephant trophy is an offense.” Kaba only was inflicted to a 19 day prison term and a US\$ 12 fine, a pathetic sanction compared to Article 164 of the Faunic Code that states a penalty of 3 to 6 month prison.

Elephants in Guinea have not been counted recently. In 2005, there were apparently 200 remaining in the Zima forest.



**Seizure of 115.5 kilograms of ivory**  
**Mumbwa, Central Province, Zambia**  
**December 22, 2013**

2 suspects, a 52 year old woman and a 37 year old man, were arrested at a roadblock as they drove to Lusaka, the Zambian capital. 2 others have fled. 31 tusks or sections of tusks were in 2 large travel bags. «In our opinion, this is the result of one or 2 years of poaching» said the spokesman of the National Environment Agency.

**Seizure of 10 kg of ivory**  
**Kawai, County of Narok, Kenya**  
**December 25, 2013**

KWS guards surprised 3 armed poachers, one of which held 10 kg of ivory. The individual, William Kinyamar, is notorious for his acts of poaching in the Masai Mara Game Reserve. His 2 accomplices escaped and are sought after. It was Christmas Day. Ivory is estimated at 2 million Sh (US \$ 23,500).

**Seizure of 29 kg of ivory and hippopotamus tooth weighing 900 g (Hippopotamidae family, Appendix II)**  
**Kisaki, Morogoro Region, Tanzania**  
**December 26, 2013**

Hippo ivory is increasingly mixed with elephant ivory. The elephant carcasses are identified, those

of hippos are not. They die in swamps. The defendant was caught in the train for Dar es Salaam. The value of this seizure is estimated to around US\$ 16,000. An abandoned bag with 19 kg bag of marijuana was also found under a seat of the train. The arrest took place at Kisaki station in the heart of the Mikumi National Park and near the Selous nature reserve.

**Elephant poaching**  
**Olarro, County of Narok, Kenya**  
**December 28, 2013**

There is no cease fire on New Year for the elephants. A new victim was regrettably found near the Oliriri dams. Its tusks had been ripped off. Aware Elephant, a local NGO and other defenders of wildlife found the carcass after the hyenas.

**Seizure of 14 kg of elephant ivory**  
**TransMara, County of Narok, Kenya**  
**December 30, 2013**

Following an investigation over several days, national police and KWS officers arrested 3 suspects in Narok County. They carried 14 kg of ivory cut into 8 sections worth 2.8 million shillings (U.S. \$ 32,909). The 3 were released on bail.

**Arrest of an ecoguard for the trafic of elephant parts**  
**Maroua, Far North Region, Cameroun**  
**December 2013**

Has the new class of ecoguards collected from a reserve of reformed poachers or the toughened hunting tribes met their first defeat? An ecoguard from the Waza National Park offered the bi-products of elephants, giraffes and other wild animals for sale. Law enforcement agencies and the NGO LAGA participated in the discovery of the trafficking.





### **Seizure of 2 elephant tusks**

**Endebess-Suam road, County of Trans Nzoia, Kenya**

**December 2013**

Police chased a motorcycle on the road leading from Kenya to Uganda. After 2km the pursued abandoned his bike and the load it was carrying to run away on foot. The officers found 2 tusks weighing 43 kg total. The suspect is being searched for it is possible that he is part of a gang operating between Kenya and Uganda. A Mt Elgon National Park official said that 5 elephants have been killed there since the beginning of the year. The park spreads over part of Kenya and Uganda. It covers 1,279 km<sup>2</sup> and was listed a biosphere reserve by UNESCO.

### **Court appearance for the ivory smuggling**

**Mombasa, Kenya**

**December 2013**

Nicholas Maweu is accused of being an accomplice in an attempt to export 382 elephant tusks and 62 ivory pieces. The attempt took place in July 2013. The ivory cargo was declared as peanuts and was found in the port of Mombasa before the container was loaded to be shipped to Malaysia (see « On the Trail » n°2). The accused denied any involvement in the smuggling. His lawyer requested bail. The prosecutor called for the bail to be set at the value of the ivory, nearly U.S. \$. 2 million. The judge decided otherwise. Nicholas Maweu was released on bail for ... U.S. \$.1,000.

### **Seizure of 2 elephant tusks**

**Chimbonila district, Province of Niassa, Mozambique**

**December 2013**

The Guinean citizen was arrested in possession of 28,5 kg of ivory. The police arrested him at a traffic stop while he was traveling by bus toward Lichinga, the capital of the province. He carried a bag full of ivory, precious stones and local banknotes (135,000 Meticaïs, or US\$ 4,500). Musa Jane said he was very surprised at the opening of his suitcase. «It was given to me by a friend to bring to Lichinga.»

### **Poaching of 2 elephants**

**Matusadona valley, Province of Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe**

**December 2013**

In Zimbabwe, cyanide is not the only way to kill an elephant. High caliber guns are also employed.

### **Seizure of an elephant tusk**

**Hurungwe Safari Area, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe**

**December 2013**

5 more poachers from Zambia were surprised by the Park Rangers. One of the poachers was wounded and arrested, the others fled. An elephant tusk, machine guns, ammunition and food were seized on-site.

## **ASIA**

### **Theft of 100kg of ivory**

**Vinh, Province de Nghe An, Vietnam**

**October 9, 2013**

The ivory was sealed in the city's court of justice. They were part of a 209 kg block seized in 2012 and valued at US\$ 330,000. 4 People's Committee employees of the court proceeded to steal them. They were arrested. It was planned, according to the doctrine hitherto in force in Vietnam, to sell the seizure at global auction. However, the operation was postponed after organizations for the protection of wildlife protested. The destruction of this stock would be a great move in this country neighboring China.



The scene of the theft

### **Poaching of one elephant**

**Close to Neora Valley National Park, West Bengal, India**

**October 10 2013**

His decomposing carcass was found in Sakham near the Neora Valley National Park. The elephant's head was missing. His trunk lay next to the body. The autopsy revealed that the jumbo was killed by gun shot. He was no doubt chased before falling. It is unknown where the shooting took place, maybe Assam or Nepal, or more simply somewhere in the 88 km<sup>2</sup> of the Neora Valley National Park. Rumor has it that rhino poachers from the Indian state border to Assam are falling back on elephants in the North of West Bengal where over 800 boarder control positions need to be filled. Furthermore, ivory hunters might have taken advantage of the Sharad Navrati festivities and a certain loosening of guards' activities during that time.



Neora Valley National Park

### **Seizure of 2 tons of elephant tusks and 146kg of turtle**

**Haiphong, Province of Haiphong, Vietnam**

**October 2013**

Border police scanned a suspect container declared to contain 27.5 tons of shells. They found elephants and turtles in spare parts. Each tusk was cut into 3 or 4 pieces. The container coming from Malaysia was registered by the Hai Phong Trading Company, Import and export LC based in the Province of Quang Ninh. It was headed towards China. The elephant and turtle by products were hidden in bags of shells. The smell of sea products disturbs any detection by sniffer dogs.

In March 2009, border police in Vietnam had found 7 tons of ivory in a container coming from Tanzania.

### **Poaching of one elephant**

**Manbir Forest Reserve, State of Odisha, India**

**October 2013**

He was shot dead. He was about fifteen years old. He could have been killed by professional poachers from the State of Jharkhand. A herd of around twenty elephants travel each year at this time of year from the State of Jharkhand to the Rairangpur forest in the State of Odisha. Between 2009 and 2013, at least 20 elephants have been mortally poisoned close to the Rairangpur forest.

### **Poaching of one elephant**

**Subankhata Reserve Forest, State of Assam, India**

**October 2013**

The mutilated, dead elephant- his tusks had been cut off- was discovered by a local organization on the border between Assam and Bhutan.

### **Seizure of 2.4 tons of elephant tusks**

**Port of Haiphong, Province of Haiphong, Vietnam**

**October 2013**

Hai Phong, the Vietnamese port smells of ivory, turtle and pangolin. The 2.4 tons of elephant tusks were unloaded from a cargo ship coming from Malaysia, most certainly African ivory. They were addressed to the Gia Exim Joint Stock Company.



### **One man arrested for poaching**

**Region of Bago, Myanmar**

**October 2013**

Over the last year, about 20 elephants have been killed in mountain forests, killed for their ivory tusks but not only. The skin is stripped and the leather sold by hunter- tanners for US\$ 10,000. It is used to make bags, boots, belts and other fashion or decorative accessories. The loot is supposed to be exported by boat from the Bawni hydraulic dam.



### **GANG**

#### **2 ivory trafficking gangs dismantled**

**Xiamen, Province of Fujian, China**

**November 4, 2013**

Customs revealed details of a lengthy inquiry that led to dismantling 2 gangs responsible for the illegal import of 12 tons of ivory for a total estimated value of US\$ 98 million. The head of the first network, a certain Chen, coordinated trafficking between Africa and China to meet demands much higher than those of his shop, officially authorized to sell ivory. Customs had been watching the network since 2011. In August 2013 several gang members had been arrested and nearly 2,000 kg of ivory seized. Customs accuse Mr. Chen and his partners for having organized at least 4 times especially in 2011 illegal imports of ivory hidden in sand, cashew nuts, metal and leather. More recently in September 2013 nearly 800 kg of ivory coming from Cote d'Ivoire were seized (see « On the Trail » n°2, September 14 and 19, 2013). Chen and his accomplices have already been sentenced to 15 years prison term.

Mr. Liu is thought to be the head of the second network. In April 2012 he apparently bought 7 tons of ivory in Africa with assistance from a certain Zhang. The container full of wooden boards in which the tusks were hidden had transited through Malaysia before returning to China, to a warehouse in the town of Shishi in the Province of Fujian.





**Poaching of one elephant**  
**Kholgarh Reserve forest, State of Odisha, India**  
**November 11, 2013**

Forest guards found the rotting body of a male elephant. He was about 50 years old. No wounds were visible. He might have been poisoned. The tusks had been removed.

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks (8kg)**  
**Pollachi, State of Tamil Nadu, India**  
**November 18, 2013**

Police stopped a car during a routine check at 5:45 in the morning. A suspicious package was found. Faced with the contradictory explanations the passengers offered, they proceeded to open the package; 2 tusks measuring 76 cm tusks were discovered. The 4 passengers immediately fled, taking advantage of the early morning darkness. The 25-year-old driver was arrested. The vehicle was towards the State of Kerala, in the south of the country.

**Poaching of one female elephant**  
**Pasighat Area, State of Arunachal Pradesh, India**  
**November 2013**

Killed for her trunk, the female elephant, who has no tusks, was found in the jungle with the traces of gunshots in the head and a few kilograms of meat taken from her back. The murder was revealed by the DEWFEDS (Daying Ering Wildlife Foundation Eco-Development Society).

**Seizure of 50 kg of dried elephant skin**  
**Phyue Township, Region of Bago, Myanmar**  
**November 2013**

In the region of Bago precisely where elephants are slowly disappearing, the 50 kg of elephant skin were seized in a bus. Note that the best parts to use for leather are the ears.

**Seizure of 120 elephant tails**  
**Sitsayan Reserved Forest, Region of Ayeyarwady, Myanmar**  
**November 2013**

Elephant ears to make bags. Elephant tails to make diner.

**Imprisonment for ivory traffickers**  
**November-December 2013**  
**China**

- The 8 website hosts bought ivory on foreign sites, imported the items in China under brushes for calligraphy or sewage pipes headings and then resold these to the Chinese market through an online store. They were sentenced to prison terms from 3 to 15 years. The director of the company was also fined for US\$ 500,000.

- On November 8<sup>th</sup> 2013, the Supreme Court of Guangdong Province aggravated the trial judgment: 2 ivory traffickers were sentenced to 12 and 14 years in prison for attempting to introduce in China 1.04 ton of ivory.

- 10 people engaged in the same trade were sentenced to similar prison sentences in the neighboring province of Zhejiang.

Buyers of illegal ivory sold out of official licensed stores are not immune to heavy judicial sanctions.

- In early December 2013, an ivory fan was sentenced to 10 years in prison for having ordered on illegal sites 2 tusks and 168 small sculptures. The defense argument that these orders were intended to enrich a personal collection have not been taken into account.

Meng Xianlin, executive director of the application of CITES in China, states that «significant seizures of contraband ivory carried out in China, including Hong Kong, demonstrate the country's important efforts implemented to combat illegal trafficking of wildlife». «China will work closer with countries of origin, transit and destination to combat the illegal trade in ivory». «The only solution is working together». «Together we can win this war». Sanctions and fines have been hardened. At the same time, China has made the right decision to avoid the death penalty for ivory traffickers and other animal matters. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

**One elephant poached**  
**Naharjan, State of Assam, India**  
**December 10, 2013**

The elephant's death was unknown until the forest guards were warned. When they arrived on the premises, the elephant's body had almost disappeared. Ears, trunk, tail, legs, meat. The villagers had proceeded to a complete blood bath. "We can't even know if it was a male or female" and therefore whether the deceased had tusks or not.

**3 years prison sentence for trafficking 2.4 tons of ivory**  
**Hô-Chi-Minh City, Vietnam**  
**December 12, 2013**

The Manager from Thai Minh Import and Export Co Ltd and his assistant were sentenced to 3 years prison term and a US\$ 480 fine. They had declared to customs the import from Mozambique of 2.4 tons of salted cattle skins worth US\$ 53,375 through their partner in Singapore (see « On the Trail », elephant section, August 22, 2013). This category is tax free. Inside the container was 2.4 tons of ivory. A third suspect is on the run. In 2009, a container coming from Tanzania was stopped by Customs in the Hai Phong port with 7 tons of ivory. In June 2012, the same ones had discovered 158 tusks for a total weight of 2.5 tons. The merchandise was coming from Singapore. It was hidden among 24 tons of cowhide leather with declared value of US\$ 5400. The undeclared value of the 158 elephant tusks from Africa was about US\$ 5 million. The cattle/ivory channel between East Africa – Singapore and Vietnam is a classic. So when will the seized ivory in Vietnam be destroyed ?

**Seizure of 15 mega ivory tusks**  
**Bangkok, Province of Bangkok, Thailand**  
**Decembre 13, 2013**

Belgian customs let it go by. Yet the shipment was of quite a size. Will European border police make good use of the information communicated to them by Thailand? The total value is estimated to be US\$ 1.5 million.



**Seizure of approximately 160kg of ivory  
Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong  
Between December 13 and 15, 2013**

The ivory was found in luggage registered under 14 people on 13 different flights coming from Dubai and Johannesburg. 7 travelers, 4 men and 3 women aged 24 to 48, were presented before court. One of them was sentenced to a 4 months prison term, the others received fines between US\$ 30,000 and US\$ 80,000.

**Seizure of 200 kg of Ivory  
Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Vietnam  
December 15, 2013**

The Mozambique, Singapore, Vietnam channel strikes again. This time the airway flights were used. Border police at the Hanoi airport just as their colleagues at the Hai Phong airport were not fooled.



**2 poachers arrested  
Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, State of As-  
sam, India**

**December 19 and 20, 2013**

One of the suspects is implicated in the murder of a mother rhino and her baby in this same park in November. Another man is being searched for participating in the poaching of a rhino during the Diwali celebrations. A Rs 10 lakh (US\$ 16,000) reward is offered to anyone holding information that would lead to his arrest. The suspect is on the run. Park officials are complaining of the lack of cooperation from officials in Dimapur.

**Elephant poaching  
Kundapal, State of Orissa, India**

**December 25, 2013**

The tusk was found dying. Rangers tried in vain to treat him.

**EUROPE**

**Seizure of 82 kg of ivory  
Poitiers, Poitou-Charentes Region, France  
Decembre 10, 2013**

2 tusks and pieces of tusks worth € 80,000 were seized from the trunk of a car on the A10 highway in the center of France. The discovery happened thanks to a routine customs road check on a rest area. The driver presented a forged certificate for the 2 tusks and had no justification for the pieces. 2 rings and precious stones were found with the ivory valued at € 10,500 for the entire load.



**OPERATION GULAK**

**Seizure of ivory items  
Portobello Market, Greater London, United  
Kingdom**

**December 2013**

The infiltration of a Greater London specialized brigade in Portobello market have resulted in the seizure of numerous ivory items and information to antique dealers about the intricacies of regulation. It is authorized to sell ivory items produced before 1947 if documents certifying the anteriority to the legal date can be produced. Ivory were seized in 17 stalls and at least 3 antique traders will be brought before the court charged with the illegal sale of ivory. The Metropolitan Police Service (Met) has launched operation Gulak one year ago. Police officers are working in plainclothes, focusing on ivory, turtle shell and crocodile skin objects.



## The Eiffel and the Ivory Tower

France is the first European country to publicly destroy the ivory seized by customs and other official services. This initiative will have a leading effect on other states of the European Union. This measure is followed by a reinforcement of repression and sanctions against ivory traffickers and new guidelines as regard to dealing with seized ivory. France pledges to also reinforce cooperation with international organizations battling traffic of protected animal species and animal parts.

The French government is implementing a coordinated plan to tackle international trade of ivory, rhino horns, feline skins, pangolin scales, parrots and chimpanzees to state some examples of the species concerned.

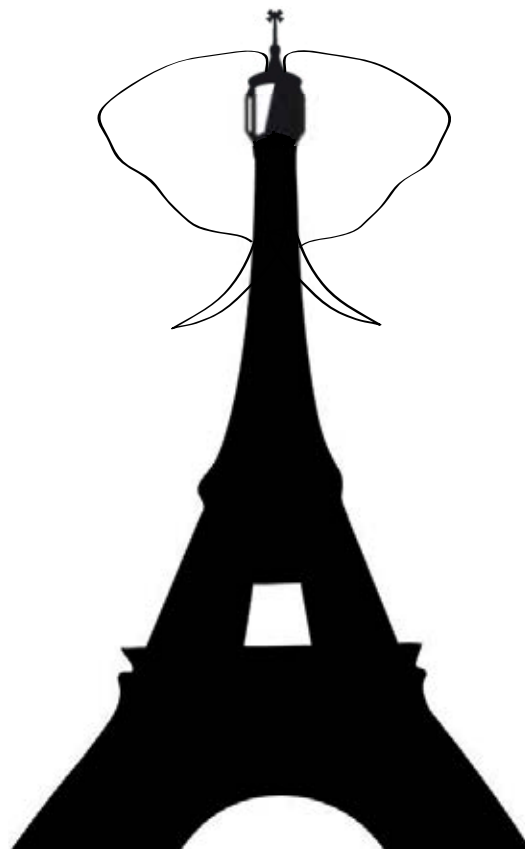
Grinding then incinerating the illegal ivory is not only sensational and symbolic. To burn 3 tons of ivory is an anti-speculative act that removes permanently from the market a banned material sold for up to 8,000 € per kilo.

Strict management of confiscated ivory if applied in France and in other States party to CITES Convention will reduce thefts and attempted thefts worldwide that are on the rise in museums, Court storerooms and governmental stockpiles.

Until recently, the French doctrine with regards to seized ivory was to collect and store it for use in training customs officers, or to give it to museums for non-commercial use aimed towards learning and research. Yet this is not the first time that seized ivory has been destroyed on French soil. For example in 1989, 720 elephant tusks were grinded at Roissy airport under Customs' authority and following a request from the Ministry of Finances.

Robin des Bois archives mainly based on yearly reports and correspondence with the Ministry of Environment and French Customs show that since African and Asian elephants were listed under Appendix I or II of CITES and the enforcement of this Convention in France (1978), at least 17 tons of raw or carved ivory have been seized on national territory. Also, in 1981, 16 tons of illegal ivory were apparently sent back to Central African Republic.

Destruction scheduled this Thursday 6 February 2014 at the foot of the Eiffel Tower will be completed by other operations for new and older seizures when checking from Court room stocks and other holding institutions will have been finished.



## Other Mammals

### AFRICA

#### **3 people arrested for poaching Barbary stags (*Cervus elaphus barbarus*, Appendix III in Algeria and Tunisia)**

**Hammam Beni Salah, wilaya of El Tarf, Algeria  
November 2-3, 2013**

The 3 hunters, aged 50 to 60, were caught in the act and taken in for questioning.

Barbary stag is a subspecies of red deer. Its preferred habitats are forests rich in cork oak and zeen oak or Algerian oak. Antlers measure 80 to 120 cm. The male can reach a height of 120 cm and weigh up to 200 kg. Their reproduction is slow. Their population could be reduced to a few dozen. They survive under the combined pressure of forest fires, poaching and habitat fragmentation.



Algerian oak (*Quercus canariensis*)

### AMERICA

#### **Seizure of a Central American agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III in Honduras), several nother-naked tailed armadillos (*Cabassous centralis*, Appendix III in Costa Rica)**

**Francisco Beltrão, State of Paraná, Brazil  
October 18, 2013**

Environmental police seized an agouti and several dead armadillos along with a shotgun and ammunition. One person was arrested.

#### **Poaching of a Baird's tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*, Appendix I)**

**Chirripo National Park, Province of San Jose, Costa Rica**

**October 2013**

Poachers threw the remains of a female tapir into a river. "Poaching, illegal plantations of marijuana and bird trafficking have increased", complained the director of the park. The Chirripo National Park

covers 500 km<sup>2</sup>. There are not enough rangers to fight against the trafficking of both wildlife and drugs. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> finding in 3 months in the park of the remains of Tapir, a highly vulnerable species with a very slow reproductive cycle. Gestation lasts 13 months, and the unique baby tapir stays with its mother for 2 years. The population is in serious decline.



#### **Seizure of 7 live white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III Guatemala)**

**Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico**

**October 2013**

PROFEPA, in collaboration with the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources visited an "ecological park" in the city. Noting a degraded environment, it was decided to transfer the deer to more suitable places. White-tailed deer otherwise, the deer from the mangroves in Guyana, are abundant in North America, but are threatened in South America by habitat fragmentation, stray dogs, and capture.





**3 white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III in Guatemala)**

**State of Campeche, Mexico**

**October 2013**

Inspectors discovered the presence of 3 white-tailed deer on a private property without any legal documentation. The owner was given 5 days to present these documents.

**Seizure of 3 frozen armadillos (*Cingulata* order)**

**São Domingos, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil**

**November 14, 2013**

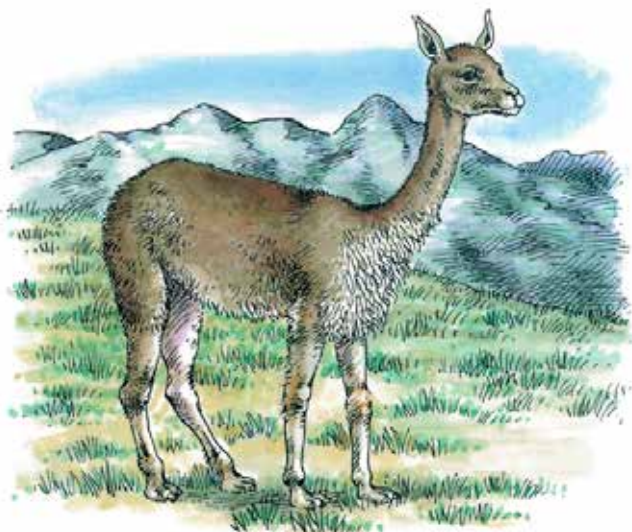
The seizure took place at the home of a 68 years old man. The authorities had received information: Germano Buratti was engaged in poaching. At his home policemen discovered a 32 caliber pistol, an air rifle, ammunition, a silencer and other accessories for firearms along with the 3 frozen carcasses of armadillos. Brazil is home to the giant armadillo (*Prionomys maximus*, Appendix I) and the greater naked tail armadillo (*Cabassous tatouay*, Appendix III in Uruguay).



**Seizure of 90 slaughtered vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II in this area)**

**Cieneguillas, Province of Jujuy, Argentina**

**December 2013**



The big sedan was speeding towards the Bolivian border. In the back of the car the police squad found 90 woolish vicugna skins and meat. Information about poachers present in the region's plains hunting down vicuñas spread thanks to local inhabitants. Vicugna wool can be sold between US\$ 300 and 650 per kilogram, especially on Asian markets. 3 vicuñas must be killed for 1kg of wool. Bolivia and Peru are at the heart of this trade.



**ASIA**

**Seizure of 7 horns of Saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II)**

**Xiamen, Fujian Province, China**

**October 2013**

Customs seized 7 saiga horns found in the suitcase of a Taiwanese passenger aboard the liner Jinxing, a vessel that sails along the shipping route between Xiamen and Jinmen.



**Seizure of a Musk deer caudal gland (genus *Moschus*, Appendix I)**

**Dotey Gewog, Dzongkhag of Paro, Bhutan**

**December 6, 2013**

Divisional Forest Officers arrested in the middle of the night a person in possession of a Musk deer's caudal gland and 2 bharal fleets. He received a 46,00 Nu fine (US\$ 737). 3 musk deer species are found in Bhutan, all listed in Appendix I.

# Multi-Species

## AFRICA

### OPERATION LEAF ET WISDOM

**Seizure of 240 kg of ivory, 20 kg of rhinoceros horns, and 47 animal parts**

**South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe**

**September 26 to October 26, 2013**

Interpol now includes illegal trafficking of animal and plant species in its priorities. Before running from late September to late October the Project Wisdom and Project Leaf focused on ivory and precious wood, police and customs officers of Mozambique were given training.

Project Leaf and Project Wisdom were coordinated between South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Forces mandated by Interpol concentrated efforts particularly on containers, bags of charcoal, and timber trucks engaged in international timber transport.

In all, and without presuming of future discoveries enabled by information gathered, 20 kg of rhino horn, 47 other animal by-products, 302 bags of charcoal, 637 firearms 2,000 rounds of live ammunition, 30 chainsaws, 200 kg of cannabis and khat, heroin, and 44 road vehicles were seized.

The 2 operations coordinated by Interpol have received financial support from the Wildcat Foundation and the Norwegian Agency for Development and Cooperation.

**Seizure of 3.9 tonnes of ivory and 534 kg of pangolin scales**

**Mombasa Port, County of Mombasa, Kenya**

**October 4, 2013**

4 days apart, 2 Twenty feet Equivalent Unit containers were closely inspected by the KRA (Kenya Revenue Authority), police forces and the KPA (Kenya Ports Authority). Instead of the sesame seeds announced by the Cosmo Freight Company, Uganda, to the Melmet Vegetable Oil Industry, Turkey, via Kenya, there were almost 4 tons of ivory and 534 kg of pangolin scales. The containers apparently were transported by train to Mombasa, a transit port.

### GANG

**Seizure of pangolins (Appendix II) and a guenon (genus *Cercopithecus*, Appendix II)**

**Mbang, Province de l'Est, Cameroun**

**October 8, 2013**

Eco-guards caught 3 poachers red-handed. The SIM (Société forestière et Industrielle de bois de Mbang-Forest and Industry Company of Mbang) sounded the alarm. Founded in 1995, the SIM is specialised in forestry, industrial treatment of wood, and log trade. The company employs several hundreds of people. Other suspects escaped. The guards seized a tremendous number of animals belonging to over 100 different species including blue duikers (*Cephalophus monticola*), sitatungas (*Tragelaphus spekii*), bush pigs (genus *Potamochoerus*) but also knives, firearms, ammunition and 12 motorcycles that were sealed under court order. Concerning

the animals, the fresh meat was auctioned on the Mbang market place. The smoked meat was sent to the Regional Forest and Fauna delegation. The 3 bush meat transporters were relatively new to the job. The youngest, 28 years old, was the most experienced. He had been doing the job for 6 months. They were part of a well-organized gang. The big bosses were not caught.



**Seizure of 12.7kg of ivory, 2 lion claws (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) and 10 pangolin scales**

**O.R. Tambo International Airport, Province of Gauteng, South Africa**

**Decembre 13, 2013**

A 58 year old Chinese woman was arrested at the Jonhanesbourg airport before boarding on a South African Airways flight. The fauna pieces were discovered during her luggage check in thanks to exterior information. She was sentenced to 3 years prison term and 50,000R (US\$ 4,890) fine for attempted trafficking. What she hid in her luggage was worth US\$ 40,000.

**Seizure of a rhino horn, elephant skin and bones, python skin (genus *Python*, Appendix II), hippopotamus skin and teeth (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II)**

**Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**December 2013**

For 6 days, a coalition composed of South African Police Services, the Defense of Rhinos of KwaZulu sydicat and Detective Services traced down the poachers and researched proof and legal evidence. Several cases of withholding weapons without legal permit were retained without possibility of directly linking them to rhino killings knowing that caliber .303 or .38 rifles can be used to kill other creatures than rhinos. Yet 2 people blessed with healing powers and benefiting in that stance of particular social status must answer to authorities. At one of their homes a stockpiled elephant skins, rhino skins, hippo skins, python skins, buffalo horns, rhino horns and wildebeest tails were found. The traditional pharmacy cupboard looks strangely like a wildlife trafficker safe. Everything was seized except for his bank account. At the others home, hippo ivory and elephant bones did not escape the search.



**Seizure of 7 rhino horns, 44 kg of ivory and 8 kg of bracelets made in ivory**

**Maputo International Airport, Maputo, Mozambique**

**December 2013**

More horn on their way to Vietnam to cure cancer! Ivory bracelets to be pretty and show off. Tusks were also hidden in the 2 suitcases. Ivory trade promoters have not yet started on spreading rumors of any sort a therapeutic value in ivory.

**AMERICA**

**Seizure of 2 baby keel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II) and a Guatemalan howler (*Alouatta pigra*, Appendix I)**

**State of Tabasco, Mexico**

**October 2013**

27 animals listed in the regulation NOM-059-SE-MARNAT-2010 were seized in Tabasco. Among them 24 turtles (*Trachemys scripta*, *Kinosternon leucostomum*, *Staurotypus triporcatus*), keel-billed toucans and a Guatemalan howler.

The birds were abandoned by the smugglers in front of the phyto-sanitary inspection point in Nuevo Campechito. They were taken to the managing unit for wildlife conservation of the State of Tabasco where they will receive proper care.

As for the Guatemalan howler, he had been spotted, perched on the shoulders of a promoter who was incapable of presenting proof of the animal's legal origin when questioned by the PROFEPA.



Nuevo Campechito control post

**Seizure of 2 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II for populations of Belize and Mexico, otherwise Appendix I), 2 yellow-headed amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I)**

**State of Veracruz, Mexico**

**October 2013**

2 roadside checks took place on the road between Coatzacoalcos (State of Veracruz) and Villa Hermosa (State of Tabasco). Final outcome: 2 arrests and 43 individuals of wildlife species seized, all listed by NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010: Morelet's crocodiles, yellow-headed amazons and turtles.



The road Coatzacoalcos - Villa Hermosa

**Seizure of 2 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), a blue-and-gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a severe macaw (*Ara severus*, Appendix II), a hybrid spider monkey (*Ateles hybridus*, Appendix II), 3 red howling monkeys (*Alouatta seniculus*, Appendix II) and 11 black-bellied whistling-ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*, Appendix III Honduras)**

**Girardota, Departement of Antioquia, Colombia**

**Decembre 16, 2013**

The seizure occurred at the home of a 25 year old man. He has been accused for the illegal exploitation of natural resources. The animals were smuggled into the house in suitcases or buckets. They were anesthetized to limit noise so that they authorities were not alerted. In addition to the environmental damage caused by this type of traffic, new pets can transmit diseases to their owners.



Above *Alouatta seniculus* below *Ateles hybridus*



**Seizure of 8 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II), a tartaruga (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II), a common squirrel monkey (*Saimiri sciureus*, Appendix II), 3 black-bellied whistling-ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 2 Caribbean flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II)**  
**Alvarado, Departement of Tolima, Colombia**  
**December 2013**

The red flamingo couple showed signs of malnutrition. They were taken to the zoo where first they will be placed in quarantine. This quarantine will enable the care-takers to feed them shrimp, part of their natural diet. In some weeks they should be released into the Los flamencos natural reserve in the District of Guajira.

As for the turtles, the monkey and the birds, they were taken to a veterinarian center before release into their natural habitats.



*Saimiri sciureus*



*Dendrocygna autumnalis*



*Phoenicopterus ruber*

## ASIA

**Seizure of 2.4 kg of tiger bones (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I) and 3 bear gall bladders (genus *Ursus*, Appendix I ou II)**

**Valmiki Tiger Reserve, State of Bihar, India**

**October 7, 2013**

2 locals residing in the buffer zone of the Valmiki Sanctuary were arrested during the night. They said they had been paid to transport the "merchandise" to Nepal. The final destination was probably China. The tiger bones appeared to be old. Analyses in a specialised laboratory will confirm this. They possibly were artificially aged. Tiger population in the Valmiki Wildlife Sanctuary is estimated at around twenty individuals. Asian Black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) can also be found there.



**Seizure of 241 frozen pangolins (7.6 t), 1.54 tons of pangolin scales, 267 kg of python skin (genus *Python*) and 186 kg of turtle meat**

**Jiangmen, Province of Guangdong, China**

**October 23, 2013**

After a chase in Chinese waters, large off the Jiangmen port, border police intercepted the fishing boat at night. As it often happens aboard fishing fleets in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, goods that have nothing to do with fish were found. The longest python skin measured 8 m. All the "goods" were from Indonesia. The 5 "fishermen" were arrested. It appears the merchandise had changed boats during the trip between Indonesia and China. Criminal organizations take the risk to import animal products to continental China hoping to make a considerable profit. In Indonesia, one kilogram of pangolin meat can be sold for 70 to 100 Yuan (€ 8.5 to 12), on the black market in the Province of Guangdong, the same kilo can be sold ten times more. The value in China of the entire seizure is estimated at US\$ 2.9 million.





© China Daily

The python skin measures over 8 m long. This seizure is comparable to the one made in the Malaysian waters on September 20, 2013 (see « On the Trail » n°2, section multispecies)



© China Daily

Frozen pangolins without scales

**Seizure of 2 stuffed Sumatran tigers (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I) and one stuffed Malaysian Sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I)**

**Banda Aceh, Province of Aceh, Indonesia  
October 24, 2013**



The 2 Indonesian soldiers were sentenced to 2 months prison term and to a US\$ 454 fine for possession of the 2 felines and a bear. What about the taxidermists, will they be held accountable? The Sumatran tiger population is between 200 and 300 individuals. There is no known estimate of Malayan bear populations.

**Seizure of 3 keeled box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii* Appendix II) and a Sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*)**

**Huế, Thua-Thien Hue Province, Vietnam  
October 2013**

Perfect ingredients to have a civet coffee and pangolin soup in the company of a small turtle! A motorbike on the way to Hue was stopped by police. 20 kg of wildlife were found, including 3 keeled box turtles, a common palm civet, 2 masked palm civets, and a sunda pangolin. According to the police, the local traffickers use motorbikes because they are more convenient than a car for escape, and are less expensive in case of seizure.



© Torsten Blanck

*Cuora mouhotii*



© Kot

Traffic in Hue

**Seizure of 8 carcasses of wild yak (*Bos grunniens*, Appendix I), 6 carcasses of tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I), one carcass of Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) and 2 carcasses of wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)**

**Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and Province of Qinghai, China**

**30 November and 1 December 2013**

The guards of the vast park of 45,000 km<sup>2</sup>, average altitude 4000 m, believe that the poachers' vehicle or vehicles avoided checkpoints by crossing a frozen river around November 26. An all-terrain vehicle was intercepted in the area on November 30 with

6 yak remains on board. The other dead animals were found in a house nearby. Poachers track them at night with highbeam headlights and knock them down on purpose. Yaks are poached for meat and fur. Tibetan antelope are hunted for their precious fluff. Shahtoosh wool, the finest in the world, is priceless. Quality shawls can reach € 30,000, even more expensive than vicuña shawls. 3 to 5 dead tibetan antelopes are needed to make a shahtoosh shawl.

**Sentenced for smuggling 40 pangolins, 1 paw of a Malayan Sun Bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) and 114 paws of Asian Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)**

**Funing, Province of Yunnan, China**

**December 7 2013**

After refusing to stop at a police check 2 smugglers fled into the mountains and were eventually caught. Both were sentenced to 10 years in prison and one with an additional fine of U.S. \$ 1,652. Of the 40 pangolins, 2 were Chinese pangolins (*Manis pentadactyla*, Appendix II) and 38 Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*, Appendix II). The total seizure is estimated to be worth 242,140 Yuan (U.S. \$ 40,016).

**Conviction for possession of bear gallbladders (*Ursidae* family, Appendix I) and musk deer glands (genus *Moschus*, Appendix I) trafficking Gopeshwar, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**December 2013**

The case dates back to September 2008. The 2 culprits were sentenced to 3 years imprisonment and Rs 10,000 (US\$ 161) fine each.

## EUROPE

**Court hearing for a man accused with 12 charges for trafficking elephant ivory, whale teeth (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I), whale vertebrae, turtle bones, hippopotamus bones (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II)**

**Wimbledon, England, United Kingdom**

**October 3, 2013**

Alick Edward Brown faces charged before the Wimbledon Magistrates court for sale of a specimen of an endangered species and unlawfully acquiring a specimen of imported species. His artist's studio was filled with whale vertebrae, turtle shells and whale teeth.



**Seizure of a lynx fur coat (genus *Lynx*, Appendix I ou II), of one turtle shell lamp shade (order Testudines), a python skin (genus *Python*), 2 elephant tusks and carved ivory.**

**Avignon, Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France**

**Decembre 9, 2013**

Bis repetita (see « On the Trail » n°2). The objects were seized at an international rummage sale taking place at the exposition center in the city of Avignon. The people selling the good with no certificates received a fine from custom services. 4 necklaces made of red coral were also confiscated.

**Seizure of fur coats of a Lynx (genus *Lynx*, 5 species in Appendix I and II), a Jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), a panther (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), and an ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I) and crocodile leather goods (family Crocodylidae, Appendix I and II)**

**Paris, Region d'Ile-de-France, France**

**December 19, 2013**

Inherited fur coats, deadly leather shoes and bags were giving off a posthumous odor of crocodile, lynx, jaguar and panther were seized by customs at the auction house Drouot in Paris. The auctioneer was not able to provide the necessary marketing certificates for the articles.



**Seizure of a brown bears paws and bile (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), mammoth tusks, 3.000 furs and other animal by products**

**Blagovetchensk, Oblast of Amur, Russia**

**December 2013**

A modern poacher's Ali Baba's cavern was searched near the Amur River that marks the border between Russia and China. Result: 3.000 furs from river rats (*Myocastor coypus*), least weasels (*Mustela nivalis*) and raccoon dogs (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*), sea cucumbers (*Stichopodidae*, a species listed in Appendix III in Ecuador), red deer antlers (*Cervus elaphus*, CITES status varies according to sub-species), toads (*Pedostibes hosii*), mammoth tusks, medicinal plants and emeralds. This is the fourth time since 2012 that such an operational platform for illegal export towards China has been discovered in the area by Russian border police.



## Pense-bêtes\*

### Reservations

The document synthesizing reservations\*\* expressed by CITES Parties to listing of species to Appendix I, II, III has been updated and is available at the following internet address:

<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2013/E-Notif-2013-047-A.pdf>

### Elephant ivory stockpiles: marking, inventory and security

The CITES Secretariat sent notification to all Parties on December 2, 2013 reminding present dispositions aiming in particular to improve legislative measures against fraud in ivory trade and to reinforce security and register of stocks held by governments. This notification specifies in particular the utility of indelible marking of seized tusks and strict updating of national inventories of seized ivory. All Parties must communicate to the CITES Secretariat before February 28 each year a detailed inventory showing evolution of stocks. In July 2014, at the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat will provide a report on information gathered on the inventories.

### Grey Parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II)

All Parties are invited to ask the CITES Secretariat to verify export permits "issued by or apparently issued by" the Democratic Republic of Congo. This request is formulated as quotas have been exceeded and there is concern for the volume of trade.

### Sharks and Rays

The CITES web site has opened a new section for sharks and rays in order to facilitate enforcement of listing of these species under Appendices. The entry includes referencing data, links towards useful material and tools, and meeting lists. Manta rays (*Manta* spp.) and 5 species of sharks were listed under Appendix II in 2013: the oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), the porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*), the scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*), the great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*), the smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*). Sawfish (*Pristidae* spp., 7 species) are listed under Appendix I since 2007, the great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) under Appendix II since 2005, the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) and the basking shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) under Appendix II since 2003.

### Pangolins (*Manis* spp.)

All range states are requested to compile information on the conservation of and illegal trade in Asian pangolins, their efforts to address such trade, and report before April 24, 2014 so as for the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of Standing Committee to review the information and develop appropriate recommendations.

### Tibetan Antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*)

Following Decisions adopted in 2013 in Bangkok (16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties), Member States must immediately bring seizures of Tibetan antelope wool or products to the attention of authorities in countries of origin, transit and destination, and the CITES Secretariat. The Secretariat has to date received no information and is reiterating this request.

### 27<sup>th</sup> Session Animal Committee

Practical information concerning the next Animal Committee (April 28- Mai 3, 2014, Veracruz, Mexico) and its temporary agenda have been put online.

<http://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2013-063.pdf>  
The CITES Secretariat also reminded Parties that they are to provide in preparation of this Committee certain information concerning in particular trade in sharks and freshwater stingrays (*Potamotrygonidae* spp.).



\* Literally "think-animal" in French, which means "reminder".

\*\* A statement by a CITES member-State following which it is not bound to an amendment of the Appendices. Concerning Appendices I and II, reservation should be entered within a 90-day period following the Conference of the Parties, and can be withdrawn at any time. A reservation to Appendix III can be made at anytime.

# Mongoose

The indefatigable and brave mongoose, eater of snakes, scorpions, rodents and organic waste, is threatened with extinction in Asia. They sleep in burrows or under the shade of a tree on sunny summer days. Species found in India and Sri Lanka have been officially protected for around 10 years.

Mongoose are threatened by a community respected worldwide, above all suspicion and completely unaware of the ecological crime they have been committing for generations. Mongooses are victims of painters and all those wielding a brush, practicing their skills at oil painting in art schools or studios. The mongoose's flexible, strong, dynamic and resistant fur is perfect for making paintbrushes used all over the world and answer the basic needs of aspiring or confirmed painters. The preferred species is the Indian grey mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsi*), and their tail fur in particular. In India several tens of thousands of mongooses are brutally captured and killed so that a few hairs can be fastened to paintbrush tips. In Paris, Quai Voltaire, next to the Orsay Museum, the greatest specialist sells with great ingenuity the products of these crimes. "Mongoose hairs, that's a classic." "They are very resistant because mongooses are also aquatic animals." "I don't know if they are factory farmed or raised in open air." Paintbrushes made of mongoose hairs are sold under the brand name Renoir.

Mongoose measure about 40 cm long, plus the tail that measures around 35 cm.



6 mongoose species are listed in Appendix III of CITES in India:  
*Herpestes edwardsi*,  
*Herpestes fuscus*,  
*Herpestes javanicus auro-punctatus*,  
*Herpestes smithii*,  
*Herpestes urva* and  
*Herpestes vitticollis*.

**Seizure of 20,000 paintbrushes made with mongoose hairs. Kolkata (Calcutta), State of West Bengal, India. October 2013.** In India, before the 2002 ban on commercial use of mongoose hairs, several dozens of workshops were open in New Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta. In Moradabad, in Uttar Pradesh, one production unit held a stock equivalent to 50,000 mongooses. The documentary "A brush with death" by the Wildlife Trust of India did a lot to reveal the sad fate of Mongooses, these small and stealth mammals who up to then had not caught Wildlovers' attention. Yet persecution continues. A brigade of the fauna and forest protection services descended into an underground workshop. A stock of 20,000 paintbrushes worth over US\$ 16,000 was seized. The director and 6 workers were arrested and will soon appear in court. They may expect an indulgent treatment from the judicial system for mongoose hairs in India and Nepal bring good luck according to several tails and legends.

**Seizure of 100g of mongoose hair. Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh State, India. December 4, 2013.** An individual with unusual behavior was watched by a surveillance team in a protected area. A whole harvest of white hairs thought to belong to a boar and 100g of mongoose hairs were found on him. The person was a poacher mandated by an illegal paintbrush maker.

## Cruelty at the tip of a paintbrush



In India, grey mongooses are trapped with nets and then beaten to death by hunters. They are also sometimes shot. The hairs are ripped off by hand. 25 mongooses are needed for 1 kg of hairs.

Other wild animals are sacrificed for artists' brushes. Badger hair is particularly sought for. Painters appreciate them for rendering skies. China is one of the main suppliers. Badger hair from the factory in the Pyrenees Mountains is the most appreciated and the most expensive.



In France, the Prefect of the Hautes Pyrénées district plans to authorize badger hunting by any means, underground chasing, nighttime shooting with the use of spotlights and highbeam and 4 wheel drives. In France, badger hunting is still a national tradition. A specific sounding of a hunting horn is dedicated to a badger.





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## ON the TRAIL #3

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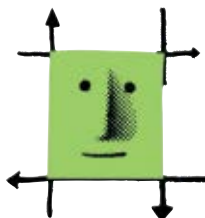
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