

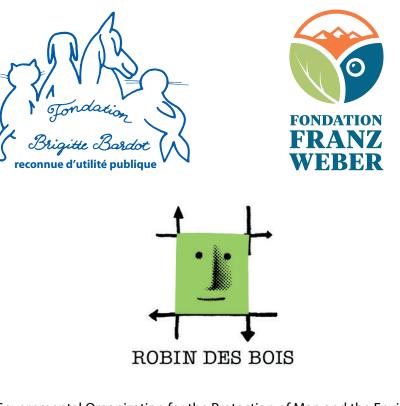
The defaunation bulletin n°30. Events from the 1st July to the 30th September, 2020



Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling Published on August 6, 2021 Original version in French



Carried out by Robin des Bois (Robin Hood) with the support of the Brigitte Bardot Foundation, the Franz Weber Foundation and of the Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition, France



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NOTE AND ADVICE TO READERS

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

"On the Trail" highlights the new weapons of plunderers, the new modus operandi of smugglers, rumours intended to attract humans consumers of animals and their by-products. "On the Trail" gathers and disseminates feedback from institutions, individuals and NGOs that fight against poaching and smuggling. End to end, the "On the Trail" are the biological, social, ethnological, police, customs, legal and financial chronicle of poaching and other conflicts between humanity and animality. No continent is spared.

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

- Pangolins + rhinoceroses + elephants
- Elephants + rhinoceroses
- Rhinoceroses + elephants + felines
- Marine and freshwater multispecies (simultaneous seizure of several aquatic species)
- Multi-species reptiles (simultaneous seizure of several reptile species)

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

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

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

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

CITES APPENDICES

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

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

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

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

Рістоз

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

Human death. Guard, ranger, policeman,

poacher... by firearm or other means.



Trapping. Poaching by jaw trap, snare ...

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

Full moon. Moonlight poaching

ACRONYMS

EAGLE : Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement **ENV** : Education for Nature – Vietnam **IBAMA** : Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis **IEW**: Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch KWS : Kenya Wildlife Service LAGA : The Last Great Ape Organization **OIC**: Orangutan Information Centre **PROFEPA** : Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente SAPS : South African Police Service SPCA : Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals **SSB** : Sashastra Seema Bal **SVW** : Save Vietnam Wildlife **SWT** : Sheldrick Wildlife Trust **USFWS**: United States Fish and Wildlife Service WCCB : Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

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- 42 RHINOCEROSES
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- Wolves, Asiatic wild dogs, Jackals, African wild dogs and hyenas
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- **GIRAFFES AND OKAPIS**
- **ZEBRAS AND DONKEYS**
- **H**IPPOPOTAMUSES
- **B**UFFALOS, BANTENGS, GAURS AND WILDEBEESTS
- 86 DEER AND MOOSE
- **GUANACOS AND VICUÑAS**
- **G**ORILLAS, ORANGUTANS, CHIMPANZEES, MACAQUES, GIBBONS, LORISES ...
- **A**RMADILLOS, PACAS, CAPYBARAS AND ANTEATERS
- **101 BATS**
- **101 OTHER MAMMALS INCLUDING HEDGEHOGS**
- 103 BIRDS
- VARIOUS REPTILE SPECIES
- **T**ORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES
- 134 SNAKES
- IGUANAS, MONITOR LIZARDS, GECKOS, SKINKS ...
- 145 CROCODILES, ALLIGATORS AND GHARIALS
- **D**ENDROBATES AND OTHER AMPHIBIANS
- **B**UTTERFLIES, PRAYING MANTISES, ANTS, BEETLES AND TARANTULAS
- **PANDEMIC OF BIG POLLUTING PROJECTS**
- **156 MULTI-SPECIES**
- VARIOUS MARINE AND FRESHWATER SPECIES
- 180 CORALS
- **C**RUSTACEANS
- **181 CLAMS**
- **A**BALONES
- SEA CUCUMBERS
- SEAHORSES
- MARINE OR FRESHWATER FISH INCLUDING SHARKS AND EELS
- **MARINE TURTLES**
- Manatees, dolphins, porpoises, sperm whales, whales, walruses ...

ON THE FRONT LINES



The Milky Way photographed by Sheldon Hooper †, cf. South Africa, August 18, 2020

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

August 18, 2020 Thornybush River Lodge, Limpopo Province, South Africa

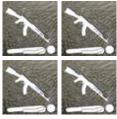
Sheldon Hooper, a 27-year-old guide, is dead. A herd of 9 elephants managed to approach the lodge despite the electric fence. Hooper found himself near a 6-month-old elephant calf. A frightened adult attacked him with his tusks. The lodge manager decided not to euthanize the elephant. The Times Live, August 19, 2020.¹



MALI

August 25, 2020 Between Bima and Batouma, Mopti Region, Mali

A Malian Armed Forces antipoaching patrol was attacked by rebel forces. Four dead. Twelve wounded. The animal most threatened by the war in



the Sahel is elephant (see "On the Trail" n°1 p. 32, n°4 p. 76, n°5 p. 83, p. 87, n°6 p. 77, n°8 p. 71, n°9 p. 73, n°10 p. 54, n°11 p. 78, n°13 p. 89 and n°27 p. 98). Reuters, August 27, 2020 ; Malian Armed Forces (Forces Armées Maliennes, FAMa), August 27, 2020.²

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

September 17, 2020 Adusa, Ituri Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Two rangers of the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 32, n°5 p. 83 and n°18 p. 96) in the north-east of the country near the border with Uganda and South Sudan died in an ambush attributed to



the Simba rebel group, the same one that killed 15 okapis 9 years ago. This killing was aimed at perpetuating the presence of the Simbas on the African and international scene. See "On the Trail" n°15 p. 98, n°18 p. 85, p. 108, n°21 p. 102, n°22 p. 108. Conserv Congo, September 18, 2020.³

Early September 2020 Chirisa Game Park, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

Tension is high in the reserve. Two poachers were killed in a skirmish with rangers. Between January and September 2020, 5 poachers were killed by rangers in Zimbabwe, and gunfire resonated in the savanna and forests 15 times. Pindula, September 2, 2020.⁴



ASIA

CHINA

September 2020

Qinghai Province and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China

During the night of January 18, 1994, a patrol headed by Sonam Dargye intercepted a convoy of 20 traffickers transporting 1800 Tibetan antelope furs (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I) on the high plateau of Hoh Xil. The column of prisoners was being taken to the police station, but on the way, they rebelled and opened fire. Sonam Dargye died in the ambush and became a hero in the fight against poaching.



The traffickers have been tracked ever since, hunted down in their families' homes and shepherds' huts. Six of them turned themselves in on November 20 and December 1, 2010. 26 years after the fact, the provincial and regional police are claiming that they had arrested the head of the gang.

China Daily, December 6, 2011 and September 17, 2020.⁵

IRAN

September 9, 2020

Varjin Protected Area, Tehran Province, Iran

The park ranger was familiar with black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II), urials (*Ovis aries*, Appendix II), brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). He even thought he had seen the spots of a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), but it was the first time that he had ever found himself eye-to-eye with the most dangerous animal in the world, an armed and raging poacher. The ranger was seriously injured in the leg by a bullet for large mammals. The human beast fled, but was later found in his home. Blood-stained clothing was found in a shed and game meat was found in the freezer. IEW, September 10, 2020.⁶



WORLD

Mid-July 2020

The Parks journal interviewed 1742 rangers on their working and living conditions. In Africa, 88% of them said that they had been threatened by poachers at least once, and 63% in Asia. Nearly 80% of rangers in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America have faced at least one life-threatening situation in the course of their work:

- dangerous encounter with wildlife
- threats by poachers
- threats by communities
- attack by poachers.
- IOL, July 17, 2020.7

PANGOLINS



Havoc, the Belgian sheep-dog, a specialist in the protection of pangolins (cf. Early August 2020, South Africa). Photo Ichikowitz

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

On the Trail n°30 Value on the black market according to media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of	1kg of	pangolin	scales
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Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Asia	China	420	38 (2019)
		774	40 (2020)
	Indonesia	70	42 (2020)
		270	44 (2020)

Value of a pangolin

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Malawi	6,058	6 (2020)
		<10,000	8 (2020)
Asia	China	1,932	39 (2020)
	Myanmar	60-67	45 (2020)
	India	10,000	54 (2020)
		546- 2,730	55 (2020)
	Pakistan	1,800	60 (2020)

WESTERN AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE

July 2020 Agboville,



Agboville, Agnéby-Tiassa Region, Lagunes District, Côte d'Ivoire A prison sentence of one year for one of the two traffickers arrested on August 29,

2019 with 148 kg of scales (see "On the Trail" n° 26 p. 48).

EAGLE, July 2020.1

LIBERIA

July 4, 2020 Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, Margibi County, Liberia

A male was liberated after a month and a half of intensive care. The animal arrived at the sanctuary on May 15, in very bad condition. He had been trapped in a noose and hung from the poacher's motorcycle.



Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, July 4, 2020.²

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

August 29, 2020 Ebolowa, South Region, Cameroon



The man was driving around during the night with 23 kg of scales in a bag. He was in charge of gathering batches in different villages. The operation was conducted with the assistance of the NGO LAGA.

EAGLE, August 29, 2020.³

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

September 9, 2020

Garamba National Park, Haut-Uele Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Border with South Sudan.

Seizure of 56 kg of pangolin scales.

Garamba national park, see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 81 and p. 85, n°8 p. 78, n°9 p. 73 and p. 83, n°11 p. 79, n°12 p. 97, n°13 p. 92, n°17 p. 98-99 and n°26 p. 4. Environews, September 11, 2020.⁴

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

Mid-September 2020 Kenya

Tsavo National Park is threatened by fires. Intentional or unintentional fires are ignited by charcoal traffickers, farmers seeking to eradicate ticks, nomadic herders who were tolerated in the park when it was empty of tourists due to Covid lockdown and who had to withdraw in early summer when the government lifted the mobility restrictions. Giraffes, big five and antelopes may possibly escape but in their flight, they may also face conflicts with human communities. To date, 3% of the park has burnt down, i.e. 1290 km² out of 43,000 km² according to the African Wildlife Foundation. The heavy rains between November 2019 and April 2020 produced a luxurious biomass, but on the other side of the coin, the dry weather and strong winds that followed are helping outbreaks of fire. (...)

(...)The most endangered mammals are the pangolins, who are not known for their celerity and end up asphyxiated or cooked by the heat in their burrows. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has been deploring an upsurge in pangolin poaching in the past few weeks. "We want to study, secure and monitor pangolins within the TCA, but it requires a serious and elaborate system". Fires caused by poachers' barbecues and cigarette butts thrown into the savannah are among the hazards that are difficult to model. The KWS, which has so far undersized extinguishing gear on site, is considering the establishment of a fire-fighting station in the park, subject to funding. In any case, the KWS is counting on the Ministry of Tourism, Kenya Airforce and NGOs such as AWF, Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Taita Ranches, WWF, Wildlife Works and Team Tsavo to control the fires as much as possible.

The Nation, October 13, 2020.⁵

MALAWI

FAMILY AFFAIRS August 19, 2020 Mangochi, Southern Region, Malawi



The brothers, Cassim and Arnold Ayami – both 35 years old – were offering a live pangolin for 4.5 million kwachas (6,058 US\$). On a tip, the police found the animal in a schoolbag hidden under a bed in an inn. He would be from Mozambique where the Ayami live.

MBC Malawi, August 20, 2020.6

August 20, 2020 Maiete Wildlife R

Majete Wildlife Reserve, Southern Region, Malawi

A Temminck's pangolin was rescued from poachers' grips, then released today after a medical checkup. African Parks, August 20, 2020.⁷

September 11, 2020

Balaka, Southern Region, Malawi

Sadik and Sydney, accompanied by a third man who fled, were about to sell a pangolin. They were asking for a little under 10,000 US\$. Malawi 24, September 13, 2020.⁸

ZAMBIA

August 23 and September, 2020 Sinazongwe, Southern Province, Zambia



Ephrain Mugande and Simple Mugande, two inhabitants of the village of Binga in

Zimbabwe, on the banks of the Zambezi, captured a pangolin inside the Chizarira national park. They crossed the border river to sell it to Menson Sialubombwe, a citizen of Zambia. But the police interrupted the transaction and locked up the trio. Menson Sialubombwe pleaded guilty and, at the beginning of September, was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Ephrain Mugande and Simple Mugande denied the facts, which did not save them from being sentenced to 5 years in jail, as well. Thanks to cooperation between Zimbabwe and Zambia, the pangolin was handed over and released in the park where he had been kidnapped.

The Chronicle, August 26, September 30 and October 3, 2020.⁹

ZIMBABWE

Early July 2020 Harare Province, Zimbabwe

A young female weighing 4.85 kg is now in the care of the veterinarians at the Tikki Hywood Foundation. She was rescued from a trafficker who was keeping her in a bucket, surrounded by her own excrements. Her hind feet were burned by the urine.

Tikki Hywood Foundation, July 6, 2020.¹⁰



July 26, 2020

Chinhoyi, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

The buyer was interested in a live pangolin and contacted Knowledge Mazivanhanga, Rodney Simbarashe Sauti and Charles Zvauya. They met at the Christos shopping center at 10 p.m., then came back for the delivery at 3 a.m. in a Toyota Axio. The buyer was an agent from ZimParks and the trap was sprung. They appeared before the Chinhoyi court on July 28, and were freed on bail for 2,000 \$ Zimbabwean (35 US\$) and required to report to the police station three times a week until their trial. New Zimbabwe, July 30, 2020 ; PA Zimbabwe, July 31, 2020.¹¹

September 10-11, 2020 Zimbabwe

Crowding at the home for pangolins in trouble. In 2 days, the Tikki Hywood Foundation has received 5 new residents, who were mistreated by traffickers and seized by Zimparks agents and the Zimbabwe Republic Police Minerals Flora and Fauna Unit. Everything will be done so that, after a period of convalescence, they will be returned to freedom. Tikki Hywood Foundation, September 14, 2020.¹²

September 20, 2020

Mushandike, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 58 scales in a bicycle saddlebag. The pangolin had been poached in the Mushandike Sanctuary. Konjiwa was bargaining with a healer in a shopping center. When he realized he was being followed by the police, he ran.

Poaching is on the rise. People are hungry. The pangolin meat was divided between several villagers, and word got out. According to a local rumor, magical pangolin meat may be a cure for Covid-19.

New Zimbabwe, October 14, 2020.13

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 23, 2020 Waterfall Shopping Mall,

Waterfall Shopping Mall, Rustenburg, North West Province, South Africa

A police patrol near the Waterfall shopping center stopped three suspects in their little Fiat Figo, with license plates from the province of Gauteng. While the car was being searched, a pangolin poked its head out. The 3 traffickers were taken in to be brough to justice.

SAPS, July 26, 2020.14

July 24, 2020 Musina, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A live pangolin was seized and a suspect arrested by the South African Police Service Endangered Species Unit. Pangolin K9, July 24, 2020.¹⁵

Early August 2020 South Africa



Havoc, the Belgian sheep-dog, is the first dog in the world to be capable of identifying the smells of the 4 African pangolin species and their scales in airports or other trafficking hotspots. Services can call on his skills at any time, in the 4 corners of South Africa.

Getaway Magazine, August 6, 2020.¹⁶

End of July – Early August 2020 N4 Highway and Midrand, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Lockdown is over for the traffickers, too. They had stopped transporting their merchandise to avoid increased police and army checkpoints and because borders were closed. A stock of wildlife had accumulated. With the health alert level down to 3, the convoys started up again. This one was napped on N4 highway. Four people were transporting a male Temminck pangolin. The same week, 3 pregnant females were also seized by the police and handed over to the capable care of the African Pangolin Working Group. In total, 11 suspects were arrested.

Roar Wildlife News, July 30, 2020 ; Independent Online, August 7, 2020.¹⁷

August 11, 2020 Limpopo Province, South Africa

An anonymous tip arrived in the mail box of the NGO Oxpeckers (oxpeckers@gmail.com): a man was selling a pregnant female. The information was transferred to the African Pangolin Working Group and to the police. The trafficker is behind bars, and the female pangolin is getting care in a veterinary clinic.

Oxpeckers, August 13, 2020.¹⁸

August 12, 2020 Limpopo Province, South Africa



Another Temminck pangolin was seized by the South African Police Service Endangered Species Unit. One arrest.

African Pangolin Working Group, August 12, 2020.¹⁹

August 13, 2020 Midrand, Gauteng Province, South Africa

When the Hawks, with the assistance of Crime intelligence agents and the Benoni canine brigade, burst into the house, they ousted 5 men and a woman who were keeping a pangolin in a cardboard box.

SAPS, August 14, 2020.20

September 10, 2020

Kuruman, Northern Cape Province, South Africa

The Temminck pangolin was rolled up in a ball in a box, on his way to some unknown smuggling deal. The SAPS intervened.

SAPS, September 10, 2020.²¹

September 11, 2020 Brits, North West Province, South Africa

Cooperation between the police and Nature Conservation led to the arrest of 3 men who were transporting a live pangolin in a Volkswagen. SAPS, September 12, 2020.²²

September 17, 2020

Engen Garage on the R21, Gauteng Province, South Africa



On a parking lot on R21, 6 men were arrested and handcuffed. They were transporting a pangolin who was in bad shape. He was taken to the Johannesburg veterinary clinic. Wildlife At Risk, September 17, 2020.²³

September 21, 2020 Komatipoort, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Border with Mozambique.

A taxi was intercepted. Two foreigners were arrested and a live pangolin seized. SAPS, September 21, 2020.24

NAMIBIA

July 18, 2020

Omaruru, Erongo Region, Namibia

Steven Ganseb and Lukas Tonateni were arrested in possession of a pangolin skin. The Namibian Sun, July 24, 2020.25

July 21, 2020

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

Seizure of one live pangolin, 4 pangolin skins and 2 cars. Three arrests. In 2019, 155 suspects were arrested in possession of pangolins or their parts and 121 pangolins were seized of whom 72 were dead.

Conservation Namibia, August 29, 2020.²⁶

July 27-28, 2020 Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

The 3 suspects were arrested in the streets of the capital. They had a live pangolin hidden in their belongings.

The Namibian, August 4, 2020.27

August 31, 2020

Okahao, Omusati Region, Namibia

Uatondasana Tjaritje was arrested. He was in possession of 142 pangolin scales. The Namibian Sun, September 9, 2020.28

September 9, 2020

Oshifo, Omusati Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.

Arrest of 3 Namibians and one Angolan in possession of 4 pangolin skins and a genet (Genetta spp.) skin.

The Namibian Sun, September 16, 2020.²⁹

September 12, 2020

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia



Akim Libuku was sentenced to pay a fine of 2,600 US\$ or, if payment was not made,

to 6 years in prison, including 2 years suspended, for possession and attempted sale of 3 pangolin skins with scales.

The Namibian Sun, December 3, 2020.³⁰

September 21, 2020 Otjiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia



A Rwandan and a Namibian were sentenced to a fine of 471 US\$ each or 2

years and 4 months in prison, if they do not pay the fine, for having transported and tried to sell a live pangolin. An Angolan accomplice was acquitted. Republikein, October 8, 2020.31

September 22, 2020

Opuwo, Kunene Region, Namibia

Viatijuaie Noumbi and Berneditus Wilhelm violated the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act. They were in possession of a pangolin armor (skin with scales).

The Namibian Sun, October 4, 2020.³²

September 27, 2020

Namibia

Ms Milupi Gideon Mwakamwi and Ms Inyambo Emmanuel Mwiya were arrested with a live pangolin in their belongings.

Republikein, October 8, 2020.33

September 30, 2020 Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia

Arrest of Rupare Domingo Tjindumba in possession of a pangolin skin and 5 hippopotamus teeth (Hippopotamus amphibius, Appendix II). The Namibian Sun, October 8, 2020.34



CHINA

Early July 2020

Shaodong, Hunan Province, China Six members of a network that sells pangolin scales have been sentenced to sanctions ranging from 6 to 12 months



in prison and fines of 5,000 to 20,000 yuan, or 714 to 2,856 US\$. Deliveries between a specialist in traditional medicine and unregistered healers were made by parcel post.

Hunan Higher People's Court, July 3, 2020.35

July 2, 2020

Tianfanjie, Poyang County, Jiangxi Province, China

At 1pm, a roving pangolin measuring 50 cm and weighing a bit over 2 kg turned up on a family's doorstep. This is the first time in 10 years that the species has been seen in Poyang county. He was taken back to the forest. He made his appearance the day before China officially raised the status of the pangolin to first-class protected species.

China News, July 4,2020; Jxnews.com, July 4, 2020.³⁶

July 3, 2020 Chaozhou, Guangdong Province, China

Release of 20 Oriental rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II), 4 silver pheasants (*Lophura nycthemera*), 10 bamboo rats (genus *Rhizomys*), 6 crested mynas (*Acridotheres cristatellus*) and a Chinese pangolin who 3 weeks earlier had been besieged by 3 dogs near a chicken farm. People had protected him with a safety cordon and had sought the assistance of forestry officials and veterinarians. He weighed 1.8 kg. He was a sub-adult unable to dig a burrow. At first he refused to eat anything, but then he started drinking and eating 100 g of ants per day. His stay in the shelter confirmed that the species is nocturnal. He began to get restless and climb the branches of his shed at about 10pm. When he was released at dusk,

he did not curl up in a ball. Instead, he listened and watched everything. He was on the alert. Then he disappeared into the thicket.



Xinhua, July 6, 2020 ; Xxcb.cn from Southern Metropolis Daily, July 5, 2020.³⁷

September 2020 Ximeng Va Autonomous County, Yunnan Province, China



A man has been sentenced to 6 months in prison and a fine of 3,000 yuan, or

437 US\$. On September 23, 2019, he attempted to illegally import 2 kg of pangolin scales worth 840 US\$, or 420 US\$/kg, bringing them from Myanmar hidden under the hood of his truck. Pangolin trafficking between Myanmar and China, see "On the Trail" n° 2 p. 23, n°4 p. 41 and p. 43, n°8 p. 31, n°9 p. 33-34, n°13 p. 39, n°14 p. 33, n°15 p. 44, n°27 p. 59 and p. 63, and n°28 p. 62.

Yunnan, September 30, 2020.³⁸

September 2020

Yueqing, Zhejiang Province, China



- Sentencing of Sun to 8 months in prison and a fine equal to 290 US\$. Living in Ningbo, he had bought 2 pangolins from Zhang for 2,700 yuan (3865 US\$).

- Sentencing of Zhang to 14 months in prison and a fine equal to 2,900 US\$. Living in Yueqing, 250 km south of Ningbo, he had recruited Tian to transport the 2 pangolins to Linhai, halfway between Yueqing and Ningbo.

- Sentencing of Tian to one year in prison and a fine of 2,000 yuan (290 US\$).

The 3 men were caught in the act of dealing wildlife on January 28, 2020, with 2 live pangolins in the back trunk of the car parked at a motorway service area for the occasion.

News.66wz.com, September 11, 2020.³⁹

September 16, 2020

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

Seizure in a sea container from Jakarta of one tonne of pangolin scales valued at 774,000 US\$ or 774 US\$/kg and 13 kg of snake gall bladders valued at 25,800 US\$ or 1,985 US\$/kg. The discoveries were made after the removal of 1,000 bags of frozen fish. The South China Morning Post, September 24, 2020.⁴⁰

September 3 and December 14, 2020 Chenzhou, Hunan Province, China

Appearance of 3 men who, from February to December 2017, traded 7 live and 11 frozen pangolins. They are sentenced to



2 years of community service, to pay all legal costs and to make public apologies in provincial media. "The three of us, Xie Mouqiang, Xie Mouwen and Xie Moujin, were ignorant of the rules of law and the environment, and in order to make a profit, we engaged in pangolin trafficking, which undermines the ecological environment and the social order. All 3 of us are sorry for our past behaviour and we are fully aware of the seriousness of our mistakes. We sincerely accept the severe punishment of the law." Sina, September 5, 2020 ; Chenzhou Municipal Justice Bureau, December 23, 2020.⁴¹

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

July 1st, 2020

Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Identified only by the initials I.L., the 34-year-old man is a gatherer who was starting his rounds. The BKSDA(Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) and the police picked him up with approximately 1 kg of scales. He admitted having come to buy a total of 10 kg to the tune of 10 million rupiahs per kilo (70 US\$/kg).

Detik News, July 1st, 2020 ; Tribunnews.com, July 2, 2020.⁴²

REPEATED OFFENSE July 30, 2020 West Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province,

Sumatra Island, Indonesia The investigation headed by a member of the NGO Fauna & Flora International (FFI) led to the arrest at dawn of 3 traffickers and the seizure of 22 kg of Sunda pangolin scales. Two of the men are locals, probably the poachers. The third is a buyer from the northern part of the island who already has a record for trafficking tiger parts and casques of helmeted hornbills.

Fauna & Flora International, August 6, 2020.43

August 26, 2020 Manggopoh, Agam Regency, West Sumatra Province, Indonesia



R.H intended to sell the 8 kg of scales for 4 million Indonesian rupiahs per kilo (270 US\$). He was reported and ended up in the hands of a joint police and BKSDA team.

Detik News, August 26, 2020 ; Topsatu, August 27, 2020 ; Padangkita, August 27, 2020.⁴⁴

MYANMAR

July 2020

Myeik District, Tanintharyi Region, Myanmar

The article in The Irrawaddy sheds light on the conditions under which pangolins are captured, transported and exported. Fifteen years ago, pangolins were not the object of unrestrained hunting. "From time to time, if we were not feeling well, we ate porridge with pangolin meat because it helps with a speedy recovery." Today, that has all changed. Sunda pangolins are hunted down and smuggled into

Thailand through the Sinakhon border checkpoint. One weighing pangolin 1.6 kg there sell for 80 to 90,000 kyats, or 60-67 US\$, a considerable sum for a family who has trouble making it from day to day. In the border town of Mawdaung, villagers sell scales or live pangolins 10 at a time to wholesalers



who then force-feed the captives and call buyers in Thailand as soon as they have a batch with a total weight of 100 kg. Until they are sent to Mawdaung, the pangolins are kept in buckets and forcefed flour or rice, a diet that is unsuitable for them and inevitably takes a toll on their good health. During the Covid-19 crisis, the transit centers have become backed up. The Thai buyers are no longer there.

One villager, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that he captured around 10 pangolins a year and that the biggest one he had ever caught weighed 3 or 4 viss, or approximately 6.5 kg. The Irrawaddy, August 27, 2020.⁴⁵

VIET NAM

July 16, 2020 Hung Yen Province, Viet Nam

Nguyen Dinh Hong, from the province of Ha Tinh, was sentenced to 11 years in prison for having trafficked 116 pangolins.



Pangolins and Ha Tinh province, see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 23, n°3 p. 32, n°15 p. 48, n°16 p. 40, n°17 p. 123, n°21 p. 119, n°25 p. 52, p. 118, n°26 p. 51 and n°28 p. 65.

VietnamPlus, July 17, 2020.46

August 31, 2020 - March 11, 2021 Nghe An Province, Viet Nam



Seizure of 6 pangolins squashed in styrofoam boxes full of ice. One of the animals required urgent care. Nguyen Dinh Sy was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Save Vietnam's Wildlife, August 31, 2020.⁴⁷

September 15, 2020 Ho Ch Min City, Viet Nam



The day before, a young pangolin was on sale on Facebook. It weighed 500 g. Today, the urban environmental police took him in. Tomorrow, he will be handed over to a specialized institution. ENV, September 17, 2020.⁴⁸

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INDIA

July 2, 2020 Kashipur, Udham Singh Nagar District, State of Uttarakhand, India

The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, with support from police and Department of Forests agents, arrested an individual in possession of a live pangolin.

WCCB, July 3, 2020.49

July 17, 2020

Guntur Distict, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

The scenario is becoming a classic: poachers post pictures or videos of their bounty on social networks, NGOs track them down, initiate a transaction and set a meeting point where the authorities intervene. This time, Uyyala Siva Koteswara Rao and Uyyala Sivaiah were lured into a trap by TRAFFIC India and the Department of Forests. They were in possession of a live pangolin that they had caught in the Edlapadu forest. Two accomplices managed to flee.

The Hindu, July 17, 2020 ; The New Indian Express, July 18, 2020.⁵⁰

August 3, 2020

Kothagudem, Kothagudem District; Bhadrachalam and Palwancha, Bhadradri Kothagudem District; Hyderabad, Hyderabad District, State of Telangana, India

Lambasingi, Visakhapatnam District; Mothugudem, Khammam District; Tirumala Kunta Reserve Forest, Chittoor District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Twelve individuals are held in custody. Seizure of 4 kg of scales. The dismantling of the network might almost be considered banal. The remarkable thing is that, thanks to the investigation by the forest services, the market value of a pangolin scale is now understood. One scale is a mass of rupees and fake money. One scale is equal to 1000 rupees or 13 US\$.

The Times of India, August 3 and 4, 2020 ; The New Indian Express, August 4, 2020.⁵¹

August 12, 2020

Panarachua, Nabarangpur District, State of Odisha, India

Agents from the Department of Forests had to use a hammer to break the toilet and free the 7-kg pangolin. The trafficker, Ghasia Santa, thought it was a clever hiding place to keep the animal until he could sell it for the right price. He was arrested. The animal will go back to the forest once it has had a medical checkup.

The Orissa Post, August 12, 2020.52

August 29, 2020

Wele, Satara District, State of Maharashtra, India

Four traffickers between 19 and 24 years old, 3 motorcycles, 6 cell phones and a live pangolin, that is the outcome of the operation carried out today by the Department of Forests with a phony buyer. Akash Dhadas, Mehboon Vijapurkar, Nikhil Khandekar and Lakshman Dhaygude were arrested, but two others got away. Vijapurkar was a cardcarrying member of the Wildlife and Snake Rescue Organisation, based in Pune.

Hindustan Times, August 30, 2020 ; The Indian Express, August 31, 2020.⁵³

September 1st, 2020

Kagaznagar, Kumaram Bheem District, State of Telangana, India

A video on YouTube enabled the Kawal tiger reserve forest rangers to rescue a live pangolin being sold for over one million rupees (10,000 US\$) and to nab 10 poachers, carriers and merchants who planned to split up the booty. In addition to the fact that their motorcycles and a car were seized, they risk several years in prison and a fine equivalent to 5,000 US\$. They were promising the moon and the stars to people in poor health, and good health as well, if they ate pangolin meat and scales.

The Times of India, September 1st and 3, 2020; The New Indian Express, September 1st, 2020.⁵⁴

September 17, 2020

Jagiroad, Morigaon District, State of Assam, India

The 3 individuals had purchased an adult Chinese pangolin for 40,000 rupees (546 US\$) in the countryside and wanted to sell it for 200,000 rupees, or 2,730 US\$, in the city.

The Times of India, September 20, 2020 ; WCCB, September 18, 2020.⁵⁵

September 18 and 25, 2020

Ratanpur, Aravalli District, State of Gujarat and Jalalpur Panwara, Kannauj District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Their car was being tracked. It was intercepted near Ratanpur. The hoodlums got away. Minhaj was hiding at his parents' house in Uttar Pradesh. He was arrested. Nasir is still on the run. As for Nadim, who was handcuffed during the roadside inspection, he admitted that the two pangolin carcasses and the over 10 kilos of scales were from Uttarakhand and were destined for Maharashtra.

The Times of India, September 26, 2020.⁵⁶

September 22, 2020 Rajbari and Hojai, Hojai District, State of Assam, India

Seizure in 2 operations of 4.86 kg of scales and 865 g on their way to China by way of Nagaland and Myanmar. Five arrests.

News Move, September 24, 2020.57

September 26, 2020 Kaderango, Saraikela Kharsawan District, State of Jharkhand, India

A SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal) patrol and police near a village happened upon 4 individuals transporting a live pangolin. The animal and the suspects were turned over to the Department of Forests. SSB, September 26, 2020.⁵⁸

PAKISTAN

September 11, 2020

Butwal, Rupandehi District, Lumbini Province, Nepal

Butwal, a major city, major spot for both legal and illegal trafficking with the neighboring China, major potential for wheeling and dealing and cover-ups for dead animals, either whole or cut up, or even live animals. The police sometimes manages to identify and raid the suppliers. "The carriers were mostly found with leopard and pangolin body parts. But we haven't been able to arrest the individuals responsible for the export of wildlife parts to China," according to a police spokesperson. Butwal's reputation as a free zone in the wildlife traffic, between the Indian sub-continent and China, is justified. This time, 5 men carrying 2 pangolin armor-skins were arrested.

The Kathmandu Post, December 16, 2020.59

August 29, 2020

Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

Agents from the IWMB (Islamabad Wildlife Management Board), pretending to be Chinese buyers on the phone, were able to lure the seller into the trap of Justice. On a website that has a reputation for selling anything and everything, he was offering a pangolin for 300,000 rupees, or 1,800 US\$. Depending on the country, pangolins are reputed for various usages. The astute detectives from the IWMB especially mention the use of pangolin scales for bullet-proof vests. The pangolin was released in a secret location, to avoid seeing him captured again in the following days.

Dawn, August 30, 2020.60

PANGOLINS, RHINOCEROSES AND ELEPHANTS

AFRICA

NAMIBIA

January 1st July 31, 2020 Namibia

Report on events of the first semester 2020:

- 38 suspects arrested for poaching elephants or smuggling ivory (compared to 90 in 2019 and 66 in 2018, for full years). Early July, the Minister of the Environment and Tourism (MET) listed 38 tusks and 16 pieces of ivory seized (116 in 2019 and 99 in 2019, for full years).

- 92 suspects arrested for poaching rhinoceroses or trafficking horns (175 in 2019, and 109 in 2018). Early July, 15 horns had been seized (8 in 2019, and 13 in 2018).

- 63 suspects arrested for trafficking pangolins (160 in 2019, and 120 in 2018). Early July, 3 live pangolins, 35 skins and 612 scales had been seized (49 pangolins and 74 skins in 2019, and 25 pangolins and 61 skins in 2018).

Those 193 people represent 53% of the 363 suspects arrested for poaching or smuggling animals during the first half of the year. Among them, 251 are in preventive custody or awaiting trial, 76 have been freed on bail, 18 convicted, 5 released after receiving a warning, 4 are on the run, one was acquitted, accusations were withdrawn for 3 and no information is available concerning the last 5. The Namibian, August 13, 2020; The Southern Times, July 10, 2020.¹

August 23, 2020 Licolo, Zambozi Pogion, Nam

Liselo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

A young man, 20 years old, from Zambia, was transporting 81 pangolin scales and an elephant tusk in his bag.

The Namibian, August 25, 2020.²

TANZANIA

Early August 2020

Manyoni District, Singida Region, Tanzania Sentencing of Jonathan Joseph alias Baraka Mungushi Noah Sajilo Shukran Nyang'a alias



Mlungushi, Noah Sajilo, Shukran Nyang'a alias Patrick and Hassan Juma alias Mpembee Mjendwa to 20 years in prison for transporting and offering for sale raw ivory, elephant meat, pangolin parts and buffalo horns and for possessing firearms without a licence. Tanzania Daily News, August 8, 2020.³



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Early August 2020 United States of America

EIA, the Center for Biological Diversity and the International Environmental Law Project are urging the government to apply the Pelly Amendment which authorizes the United States of America to suspend importations of fish products or wildlife products of any kind if the exporting country does not respect international conventions dedicated to the protection of wild fauna. The 3 NGOs are targeting China and point to their domestic trade in products based on pangolin scales. In 1993, President Clinton used that legal instrument to force Taiwan to put a stop to its domestic rhinoceros horn market. Environmental Investigation Agency, August 7, 2020.⁴



CHINA

July 28, 2020 Jiangsu Province, China

Santan sin a sta sartain Dai

Sentencing of a certain Dai to 11 and a half years in prison and confiscation of his property to the amount of 500,000 yuan or 71,400 US\$. In his home a

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amount of 500,000 yuan or 71,400 US\$. In his home and in the hideouts of his accomplices, 443 kg of ivory, 73.6 kg of elephant skins and 7.3 kg of rhinoceros skins, pangolin scales and prohibited weapons were seized. Global Times, 29 July 2020; EIA, 4 August 2020.⁵

On the Trail n°30. Robin des Bois

PORCUPINE ALERT



The Old World porcupines (Africa, Southeast Asia, the Indochinese peninsula, Asia Minor, the Mediterranean basin) have dragged behind them a flock of legends, fables and rumours for thousands of years. They have an unsuspected power of attraction and do not fail to attract poachers and traffickers. They are all grouped in the family of Hystricidae.

- A gram of bezoar is displayed on the Internet at an average price of 150 US\$, with a peak of 650 US\$ on the island of Borneo. Bezoars are concretions that form in the digestive tract of herbivorous animals. The bezoars of Old World porcupines are the most sought after today. The sellers do not skimp on their benefits. According to them, they cure dengue fever, cancer, inflammatory diseases and other pathologies. Why not Covid? The demand for porcupine bezoars is very high today. It is trendy. These precious stones are rare. Not all porcupines carry them. Far from it. There are no statistics on this matter. The race for bezoars is mostly unsuccessful. The bezoar is to porcupines what ambergris is to sperm whales. The fake bezoar industry makes up for the scarcity of genuine bezoars.



Bezoar and a device for soaking it in liquids to diffuse its benefits, pharmacy book published in 1712 (see sources)



Bezoar on sale on the Internet 2690 US\$ per 19 g. Shipping from Singapore. " Since a long time ago, it was recognized and used by the people for having the efect of « resurrecting » patients with terminal illness "(sic) - Dried gall bladders, stomachs and intestines are also sought after. Consumers expect multiple beneficial effects, including the improvement of the sexual energy and fertility. Sales prices are difficult to figure out. The economic value of organs and limbs of non-CITES wild animals remains unclear.



Dried intestine of porcupine for sale in India Photo Sagari Chaudhury and Harish Singh (cf. sources)

- Quills were used in Africa as arrows and arrowheads. They continue to be used as talismans on the continent. In the Indian subcontinent, they are used in black magic rituals and as talismans to improve crops and repel insects. In Asia, they are used as toothpicks, lucky charms and symbols of combativeness. They are made into jewellery and ornaments. On Etsy, quills sell for between $1.5 \in$ and $4 \in$ each (1.8 and 4.75 US\$), a complete lampshade for $380 \in$ (452 US\$) and a pair of earrings for $22 \in (26 \text{ US}\$)$. Earrings on Amazon are roughly at the same price. On Ebay, quills sell for between one, 2, and 3 US\$ each, a thick quill 5 US\$ and 3 dyed quills 40 US\$.



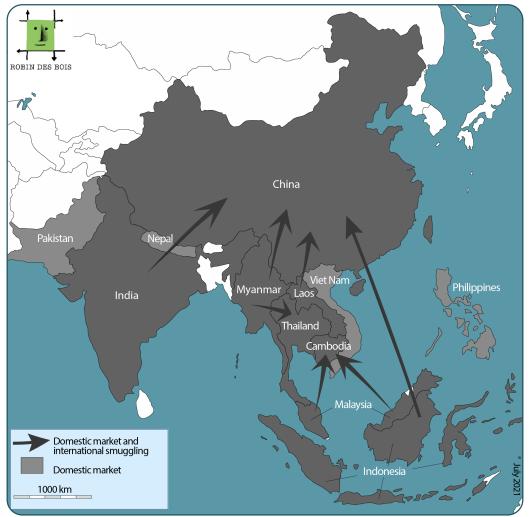






- Frozen or fresh porcupine meat is one of the pillars of bushmeat in Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean basin. In Algeria, hunting of crested porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*) has been prohibited since 1983. In Sicily, porcupines fall into traps.

Despite the protective measures taken by countries hosting the Hystricidae, successive issues of "On the Trail" report seizures on domestic markets. They are often associated with feline bones, pangolin scales and ivory. Smuggling is reported by "On the Trail" between Malaysia and Cambodia, India and China, Myanmar and China, Myanmar and Thailand, Laos and China, Indonesia and China. Frozen or fresh meat is being smuggled between African countries and the European Union. Paris airports are crossing points.



Porcupine trafficking in Asia

Despite the human predations, the forest fires, the colonisation of natural habitats by human activities, the IUCN shows little interest in Old World porcupines and continues to classify them in the catch-all category of " least concern species".

"On the Trail" also noted that the arboreal New World porcupines (American continent) are also subject to poaching and smuggling. Their teeth are worn as amulets and Chinese expatriates in South America return home with quills in their luggage. Honduras has listed the Mexican tree porcupine (*Sphiggurus mexicanus*) in CITES Appendix III, but this legal barrier seems very easy to circumvent by slipping into luggage dyed quill jewellery whose animal's origin is hidden, and natural quills that look like straws or chopsticks or mikado sticks on the screens of checkpoint scanners.

The porcupines are the unsaid of international wildlife trafficking. They deserve the same legal protection as the pangolins.

Sources :

[&]quot;On the Trail" n°1 p.12, n°4 p.95, n°5 p.52, n°6 p.42, p.100, p.103 and p.110, n°7 p.35, p.101 and p.110, n°8 p.28, n°10 p.24-25, n°11 p.92, p.94, p.95 and p.97, n°13 p.66, p.101 and p.110, n°14 p.56, p.106 and p.108, n°15 p.115, n°16 p.93 and p.101, n°18 p.38, p.110, p.114 and p.119, n°19 p.121, p.126 and p.129, n°20 p.124, n°21 p.115, p.116 and p.117, n°22 p. 117, p.119, p.121, p.122 and p.125, n°23 p.152, p.158 and p.160, n°24 p.50 and p.88, n°25 p.112, n°26 p.51, p.104, p.107, p.111 and p.112, n°27 p.124 and p.125, Covid-19 Special Edition p.20, n°28 p.120, p.127, p.128, p.129 and p.130, n°29 p.31, p.78 and this issue page 160, 167, 168, 170 and 173) ; Sarah Heinrich, Adam Toomes, Lalita Gomez, "Valuable stones: The trade in porcupine bezoars", Global Ecology and Conservation, Volume 24, 2020, e01204, ISSN 2351-9894, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2020.e01204 ; Sagari Chaudhury and Harish Singh, "Traditional uses of the Indian Crested Porcupine (*Hystrix indica* Kerr, 1722) by Birhor tribe of Purulia district, West Bengal", Small Mammal Mail, Vol. 8, n°1, March 2016.

⁻ Amœnitatum exoticarum politico - physico - medicarum fasciculi V, quibus continentur variæ relationes, observationes & descriptiones rerum Persicarum & ulterioris Asiæ, multâ attentione, in peregrinationibus per universum orientem, collectæ, ab auctore Engelberto Kæmpfero, D. [Matière médicale d'origine animale / Pierre / Concression animale / Bezoard de cochon] Pedra de por [...] - - medpharma_ res012142x0439. Edition Lemgoviæ, typis & impensis Henrici Wilhelmi Meyeri aulae lippsiacae typographi [Lippe], 1712 Cote pharma_res012142. https://www.biusante.parisdescartes.fr/histmed/medica/page?pharma_res012142&p=439

ELEPHANTS



African elephant (Loxodonta africana), River Shire, Malawi. Photo Peter Steward

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

On the Trail n°30 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of fixy of faw footy				
Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)	
Africa	Kenya	274	22 (2020)	
		765-918	27 (2020)	
		91	32 (2020)	
		933	35 (2020)	
	Malawi	1,716	41 (2020)	
	Zimbabwe	7,463	53 (2020)	
		244	55 (2020)	
Asia	Singapore	1,450	110 (2019)	
	China	540	115 (2019)	
	India	669	129 (2020)	

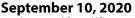
Value of 1kg of raw ivory

WESTERN AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE

July 2020

Cocody, Abidjan District, Côte d'Ivoire Djibril Gueye was sentenced to one year in prison. He was arrested in March 2019 when he tried to sell 2 carved tusks (see "On the Trail" n°24 p. 73). EAGLE, July 2020.¹



Guitry, Gôh-Djiboua District, Côte d'Ivoire

The elephant Ahmed had been living near the village of Guitry for 3 years. Some considered him to be the "genius loci," a man condemned to live in the body of an elephant. Ahmed apparently became aggressive toward cars and their passengers recently, is said to have destroyed plantations, drunk local alcohols like bandji and koutoukou, and even gasoline from car reservoirs. According to Bertin Akpatou, a zoologist and director of the NGO Action pour la conservation de la biodiversité en Côte d'Ivoire, "The more human activities develop in their habitat zones, the more it disrupts the elephants, who are migratory animals. [...] If no long-term policy, like agroforestry or family agriculture, is found, the phenomenon will continue."

Ahmed was transferred to the Abidjan zoo, which is closed for an audit, where "a female is expecting him," according to the deputy mayor Patricia Yao. After several attempts to escape, it was decided that he should go to the N'Zi nature reserve.

7info.ci, September 9, 2020; Abidjan Autonomous District, September 11, 2020; BAAB, October 2020.²

GHANA

August 14, 2020 Damongo, Savannah Region, Ghana

Abdul Latif and Abdul Alhassan, aged 27 and 24, were arrested in a hotel, and 2 tusks seized. The elephant was apparently poached in the Mole national park, which is still home to 400 elephants according to a 2019 inventory carried out by Namibian universities and funded by the European Union.



Africa Sustainable Conservation News, August 15, 2020; Ghana Web, August 15, 2020.³

TOGO

July 2020 Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo

Seizure of raw ivory and carved ivories weighing a total of 43 kg, with the help of a team from the EAGLE network.

EAGLE, July 2020.4

July 30, 2020 - December 1st, 2020 Kara Region, Togo

Six tusks seized and 4 traffickers arrested, including one who is allegedly involved in trafficking gold between Ghana and



In trafficking gold between Gnana and Burkina Faso. This exploit is the work of the national police, with support from EAGLE Togo. As for the court, it did not shine, sentencing Baba Komna, Sankamao Boukassani, David Mizou and Damigou Lare-Boni to only 24 months in prison, 20 of which were suspended, and to pay a fine of 1,817 US\$ each in respect of damages and 18,175 US\$ jointly to the Ministry of the Environment and Forest Resources. The elephants of Togo are endangered. There are only 60 left.

EAGLE, July 30, 2020; Xibaaru, July 31, 2020; La Dépêche d'Abidjan, December 3, 2020.⁵



GABON

July 2020

Gabon

Ntoutoume Abessolo Jean Jules was sentenced to 2 years in prison, including one year suspended, and a fine equivalent



to 86 US\$ for having poached an elephant, and being in possession of ivory and an unregistered firearm.

Conservation Justice, July 2020.6

July 3, 2020 Gabon

Sawadogo Alasane and Keredaouda were sentenced to 3 years in prison, including one year suspended plus a fine

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including one year suspended, plus a fine of 1 million francs CFA (1,720 US\$) and damages of 1.5 million francs CFA for having been in possession of, transported and attempted to sell an elephant

Conservation Justice, July 2020.⁷

July 10, 2020 Gabon

tusk.

Bouasse Traore and Ayi Mintsa Guy were sentenced to 2 years in prison, including one year suspended for possession

one year suspended, for possession, transportation and attempting to sell raw ivory, plus a fine of 1 million francs CFA (1,720 US\$) and damages of 1.5 million francs CFA.

Conservation Justice, July 2020.8

July 10-August 14, 2020 Tchibanga, Nyanga Province, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon Makaya Jean Almend and Tidjani Idriss



Bola-Nle Aremou are caught in the act of attempting to sell 4 baby elephant tusks (4.4 kg in total) and 16 hippo teeth. The credit for the arrest goes to the local police and Water and Forests agents with the support of Conservation Justice. Makaya and Tidjani are sentenced to 2 years in prison, one of which is suspended, and a fine of 467,000 CFA francs and 3 million CFA francs in damages (836 and 5,371 US\$). Conservation Justice, July 2020.¹⁰

Mid-July 2020 Gabon

Abdoulave Guetilika and Goldsman Mondjo, from Burkina Faso, and Jeanne Koumba, from were trying Gabon, sell 4 elephant to calf ivory tips for 500,000 francs CFA (860 US\$) when they were arrested thanks to the judicial police,



Water and Forest's agents and help from the NGO Conservation Justice.

Gabon Media Time, July 16, 2020.11

August 21, 2020

Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Norbert Ndzang Mindzeme and Jean Paulin Emane Akono received a suspended sentence of 2 and 3 years in prison for having transported and



attempted to sell 6 tusks (see "On the Trail" n°26 p.86). They got 2 fines equivalent to 3,580 and 8,951 US\$. The prosecutor had asked for 5 years in prison, not suspended. Many people are surprised and even alarmed at the lenient sentences. 7 jours Info, August 24, 2020.¹²

September 11, 2020 Koulamoutou, Ogooué-Lolo Province, Gabon



Arrest of 4 men including a school teacher. They say that the 4 tusks were "picked" in the forest. As for the leopard skin, they"found" it.



lyengue was acquitted. Ngoyabi, Baka Malamba and Movavoubi Boueni were

sentenced to 36 months in prison, 24 of which were suspended, and ordered to pay jointly and severally 3.57 million CFA francs (6,379 US\$).

EAGLE, September 14, 2020; Conservation Justice, September 14, 2020, and November 2020; Gabon Review, September 14, 2020; Agence Gabonaise de Presse, September 13, 2020; 7jours info, November 23, 2020.⁹

August 29, 2020 - November 20, 2020 Lambaréné, Moyen-Ogooué Province -Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon Diallo Demba, Senegalese, and Prince Agbaeze Chukwu, Nigerian, were arrested.



They were hiding 2 elephant tusks in the packing box of a television. A few hours later, Chukoudi Adoro, Nigerian, was arrested. The operation took place through collaboration between judicial police officers and agents from the Lambaréné Ministry of Water and Forests, with assistance from Conservation Justice. The court sentenced the 3 men to 2 years in prison, a fine of 250,000 CFA francs (446 US\$) and 3 million CFA francs (5,350 US\$) in compensation to the Water and Forests administration.

Gabon Review, August 27, 2020; Conservation Justice, August and November 2020.¹³

September 10 - November 20, 2020 Lastoursville, Ogooué-Lolo Province, Gabon

Following an anonymous tip, a team from the Directorate General for Investigations



and the Provincial Department of Water and Forest were waiting for the ivory traffickers. After 3 hours, Bernard Mokoko appeared with a heavy gray suitcase. He was arrested on the spot. He was carrying 6 ivory tips weighing 17.19 kg. He said that one pair of tusks was his and that the others belonged to Jean Bangombé in the village of Bakoussou, where he was arrested, and to Apollinaire Angoué, who was arrested at the Lastoursville train station.



After being placed in preventive detention at the Libreville prison, Mokoko and Angoué were sentenced on November 20 to 2 years in prison, including one year suspended, and Bangombé to one year in prison, and 6 months suspended. They will also be required to pay a joint fine of 4,294,500 francs CFA (7,660 US\$), including 2,095,500 francs CFA (3,740 US\$) suspended, and 1,500,000 francs CFA (2,680 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, Sept. 13, 2020; Conservation Justice, Sept. and Nov. 2020; Gabon Review, Sept. 13, 2020.¹⁴

September 15, 2020 - April 2021 Lambaréné, Moyen-Ogooué Province, Gabon



Mandji Guy Judicael, a gendarme, was arrested in possession of 6 raw ivory tips.

He was sentenced to 24 months in prison, 14 of which were suspended, a fine of 2 million CFA francs (3,580 US\$) and 1 million CFA francs (1,790 US\$) in damages.

Conservation Justice, Sept. 2020 and April 2021.¹⁵

September 17 and 18 - December 4, 2020 Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Province,

Gabon



multinational network of ivory А traffickers has been shut down. Inoussa Balima, a 29-year-old from Burkina Faso, was transporting a 17 kg tusk, cut into 4 pieces and carried in a rice bag. Arrested and interrogated, he finally mentioned a certain Robert Foudou, 53 years old, who is allegedly the owner of the ivory. Foudou was arrested the next day. Balima then informed on Yacouba Alimi, from Benin, who was arrested with 2 tusks from elephant calves. Alimi, in turn, turned in Esaïe Ndemba and Darel Jennifer Mba Obame as owners of the tusks.

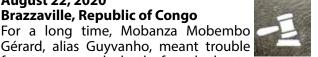
On December 4, Ndemba was sentenced 'n Obame to one year prison, Mba 2 and Alimi prison, to years in 3 million francs CFA (5452 US\$) in damages, and 13,325,000 francs CFA (24.218 US\$) in fines. Foudou and Balima were sentenced to 2 years in prison, 25,752,500 francs CFA (46.805 US\$) in fines, and 2 million francs CFA (3,635 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, September 17 and 19, 2020; 7 jours info, September 18, 2020; Conservation Justice, September and December 2020; Gabonews, September 21, 2020; Gabon Review, September 21, 2020.16

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

August 22, 2020

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo



for rangers and death for elephants. Originally from Congo Kinshasa and present in Congo Brazzaville since 2008, he led a herd of poachers, 20 to 25 of them, in the Nouabalé-Ndoki national park. It can be assumed that he organized the deaths of 400 to 500 elephants.

He and his stooges would have caught gorillas and chimpanzees to eat or to sell them. In the beginning of 2018, Guyvanho and others crossed paths with a ranger patrol. There was an exchange of fire. Guyvanho ran away as fast as a bullet. Three of his fellows stayed behind and the information that they provided regarding the recent poaching of 11 elephants convinced the prosecutor to put out an arrest warrant for Guyvanho. In May 2018, he was arrested. On June 2, 12 days before his trial, he escaped from the Ouesso prison. He was convicted in absentia to 5 years in prison and 5 million francs CFA in damages (9,000 US\$). ...

... On May 31, 2019, another skirmish occurred between Guyvanho and his accomplices and a patrol of rangers. It ended with 2 injured law enforcement officers and another escape by the slippery Guyvanho. But he did not know how to hold his tongue and his bragging finally reached the ears of the investigators, along with a few clues as to his whereabouts. The police arrested him in Ouesso on July 20, 2019, and transferred him to the local prison to serve his sentence. The authorities of the Cuvette Department soon realized that Guyvanho had such an extensive and influent network in and around Ouesso that a second evasion was probable. and even inevitable. That is why, in August 2019, Guyvanho and his 3 accomplices were transferred under high surveillance to the Brazzaville prison, 800 km away.

On August 22, 2020, Mobanza Mobembo Gérard, alias Guyvanho, was sentenced to 30 years in prison and 38 million francs CFA (68.000 US\$) in damages for the injured rangers.

Environment News Service, August 22, 2020.¹⁷



KENYA

July 12, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenva

lodine solution and antibiotic spray on the wound. The victim was a large male with a spear in his hind left leg. The prognosis is favorable. SWT/KWS, July 2020.18

July 21, 2020 Kutus, Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Two arrests. Seizure of 6 sections of tusks estimated at 1.4 million shillings (13,010 US\$). The 2 men were under KWS ranger surveillance. Citizen TV, July 22, 2020.19

July 22, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

The spear was stuck in his left ear. It was deeply embedded. The elephant was very nervous when his caregivers approached. The attack had taken place one or 2 days before the operation. The prognosis is favorable.

SWT/KWS, July 2020.20



July 25, 2020

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya The elephants live in a labyrinth of fencing. Their territory is being privatized. The male had a large knot of barbed wire attached to his left rear foot. The operation was successful. SWT/KWS, July 2020.²¹

July 26, 2020 Endebess, Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya



Simon Otieno Ochieng, a police officer, Wycliffe Kiboi Ndiema and Solomon Kibet Simotwa were arrested. They were transporting a tusk weighing 1.5 kg on a motorcycle, to be sold to KWS intelligence officers who had passed themselves off as buyers. The economic value is estimated at 800,000 shillings (412 US\$ or 274.50 US\$/kg). The police officer was already under surveillance by his superiors. He provided protection for the poachers. The Nation, July 26, 2020.²²

July 29, 2020

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya

Elephant rescue. He was limping. The wound was infected and festering. He was put to sleep with etorphine. The geometry of the wound corresponded to a spear embedded in the flesh above his foot. The joint was not affected. The prognosis is favorable. The victim had been transferred recently to the park from the Eselengei Conservancy.

SWT/KWS, July 2020.23

July 29-August 11, 2020

Kenya

The ivory trafficking suffered from the Covid-19 lockdown. Some traffickers have accumulated stocks that they are now trying to get rid of. Four operations led to the seizure of 156.9 kg of ivory. Big Life Foundation, August 11, 2020.²⁴



August 1st, 2020

Mutara Ranch, Laikipia County, Kenya

A male elephant was killed by poison or anthrax. The postmortem examination



did not reveal the cause of death. The body was found 4-5 days after taking his last breath and had not yet been attacked by scavengers. SWT/KWS, August 2020.²⁵

August 7, 2020

Oldonyo Lemporo Conservancy, Kenya

The body of a sub-adult elephant was rotting. The tusks were still there. They were put in safe keeping at the KWS office in Rumuruti. A bullet had broken the humerus of his front left leg. SWT/KWS, August 2020.²⁶

August 7, 2020 Kitengela, Kajiado County, Kenya



Julius Oloo Omolo and Isaiah Juma Babu have been arrested. In a corn sack, they were transporting 5 pieces of tusks weighing 6.1 kg, estimated at 500,000 shillings (4,666 US\$ or 765 US\$/kg) or at 600,000 shillings (5,599 US\$ or 918 US\$/kg), depending on the sources. They had come from the county of Migori to sell their booty to buyers who were in fact Kenya Wildlife Service agents. A former civil servant is allegedly the boss. He managed to get away.

KBC Channel, September 13, 2020; The Star, September 12, 2020; The Standard, September 13, 2020.²⁷

August 8-9, 2020

Kajiado, Kajiado County, Kenya

Samson Ntinga, Francis Lakati Ngarua, Dickson Kirinkol, Emmanuel Kantet Swankei and Nelson Wuantai Njiraini, assistant principal of an elementary school, were arrested by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations and the Kenya Wildlife Service. The suspects were driving around town in a Toyota Probox and on a Captain motorcycle, trying to sell 2 tusks weighing 18 kg. The elephant was killed one month earlier near Emorotoki, 50 km from there.

The Standard, August 9, 2020; K24, August 9, 2020; Directorate of Criminal Investigations, August 8, 2020.²⁸

August 11, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

A spear wound under his tail was already festering and infested with vermin; it was spotted as the elephant drank in the Mara River. The wound was properly cared for. The prognosis is favorable. SWT/KWS, August 2020.²⁹

August 16, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

A 5-year-old elephant had a deep wound on his left front leg, undoubtedly of human origin. He was unable to follow his family. The search to find him lasted 2 weeks. He had taken refuge in a dense brushy zone. The veterinary team moved him by helicopter in order to tend to his wound.

Elephant Aware Masai Mara, August 16, 2020.³⁰

August 18, 2020

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya



A male elephant was lying on the ground in the savanna. The veterinarians believe that there was a mortal combat with another male, but the 2 combatants left no trace of battle on the ground. Over 200 vultures were grouped on and around the carcass.

SWT/KWS, August 2020.³¹

August 25, 2020 Isiolo County, Kenya

When they saw the police roadblock between Marsabit and lsiolo, the occupants of the Toyota Probox stopped and vanished into the underbrush. The police seized 11 tusks in the vehicle. They weighed 172.4 kg and are estimated to be



worth 1.7 million shillings (15,798 US\$ or 91.5 US\$/kg). The tusks were not fresh. The transport was postponed by the Covid-19 lockdown. Kenya News, August 27, 2020.³²

September 4, 2020 Gathuthuma, Kirinyaga County, Kenya



Four arrests. Seizure of 4 tusks and sections of raw ivory estimated at 4 million shillings (83,992 US\$). Citizen Digital, September 4, 2020.³³

September 8, 2020 Ol Choro Oiroua Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

A female elephant calf was limping. A projectile weapon had struck the knee joint of her front right leg, without destroying it. Prognosis is favorable, but the convalescence period will be long. The rangers will keep an eye on her for several weeks. During the operation under anesthetics, the members of her family were politely requested to go and wait somewhere else.

SWT/KWS, September 2020.34

September 9, 2020

Kitale, Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya

Eric Ngilaton was arrested in possession of 3 sections of raw ivory weighing 14 kg and estimated at 1.4 million shillings (13,065 US\$ or 933 US\$/kg). The suspect, already under police surveillance, had hoped to sell his merchandise to agents disguised as clients. The ivory apparently comes from the neighboring county of West Pokot.

The Standard, September 10, 2020.35

September 18, 2020

Siana Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The adult male had already been treated 3 months earlier for a spear wound on his trunk. He was doing better, and suddenly disappeared. He was spotted alone on a hill. The tip of a poisoned arrow was stuck in his front left leg. The wound was infected. The prognosis is relatively favorable. Follow-up will be required. SWT/KWS, September 2020.³⁶

September 19, 2020

Between Isinya and Kajiado, Kajiado County, Kenya

Denis Maheli Alima, 33 years old, was arrested. He was on his way to Kajidao on a motorcycle with 10 kg of ivory (raw ivory, bracelets, necklaces, statuettes) estimated at 10 million shillings (93,324 US\$). The buyer was not found. Alima claims to have been working on behalf of a high-ranking official. At least 2 agents are allegedly involved. Apparently, the network exports its junk to Asian countries like China, Thailand or Viet Nam.

Directorate of Criminal Investigations, September 19, 2020; Daily Nation, September 21, 2020.³⁷

September 21, 2020 Tsavo East National Park, Kenya

An elephant calf less than one month old was found dead in the savanna, near the river Voi. He had starved to death. He was deprived of milk too suddenly. The mother had disappeared, perhaps a victim of a case of poaching that has not yet been discovered.

SWT/KWS, September 2020.³⁸

September 29, 2020 Eselengei, Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya



Wounded by an arrow in the front right leg, the elephant was treated after having been gently separated from her calf. She found him again unharmed when she awoke. In the middle of the operation, some rangers had to leave the scene to put out a fire.

Big Life Foundation, September 29, 2020.³⁹

MALAWI

August 7 and 8, 2020

Between Blantyre, Southern Region, and Lilongwe, Central Region, and Chikwawa, Southern Region, Malawi

A doubtful vehicle was stopped. There were 8 tusks inside. The driver is a Chinese citizen. He has been working as an interpreter in the country for 8 years. He is suspected of having participated in rhinoceros horn trafficking in Namibia in 2017. He named a second suspect who is allegedly his supplier. Nyasa Times, August 13, 2020.⁴⁰

August 10, 2020

Balaka, Southern Region, Malawi

Blackston Mwale and Chimwemwe Chindimba were arrested following a tip. In their car, the police found 2 tusks weighing 20.2 kg and estimated at over 25 million kwachas (34,674 US\$ or 1,716 US\$/kg). Nyasa Times, August 13, 2020; Malawi News Agency, August 13, 2020.⁴¹

MOZAMBIQUE

September 16, 2020 Mozambique

According to lvete Maibasse, Minister of the Environment, elephant poaching has dropped by 70% since 2014, going from 1200 per year to 360 between 2015 and 2019. She is particularly pleased that there was no poaching in the Niassa reserve or in the Gorongosa national park between March 2018 and July 2020. This bit of good news follows reinforced security in protected areas and improved surveillance techniques.

Moçambique Media Online, September 17, 2020.42

UGANDA

Early July 2020 Murchison Falls National Park, Western Region, Uganda



The carcass of an elephant was sighted by tourists and posted on social networks.

According to a UWA press release in response, the adult elephant was caught in a trap. His tusks were removed and placed in safekeeping. "We are warning those who stealthily enter the park and lay snares. Once arrested they will face the wrath of the law."

New Vision, July 12, 2020.43

July 29, 2020

Oyam and Nwoya, Northern Region, Uganda

Five poachers arrested. Seizure of a firearm and 5 tusks. The suspects poached on either side of the road between Kampala and Arua, and held cars for ransom. They were in possession of many illegal firearms. They were allegedly involved in poaching inside the Murchison Falls park (approximately 150 km away).

Okeloo Ojee and Peter Ongomo claim to have purchased one of the weapons in 2016 from a police officer, Andrew Opiyo, for 2 million shillings (541 US\$). Opiyo works at the police station on Jinja Road, in Kampala. The next men to be arrested were Andrew Opiyo and Richard Emaru, the police station armorer. The poachers' weapon indeed came from the police station armory.

New Vision, August 8, 2020; Uganda Police Force, August 7, 2020.44

End of July 2020

Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Western Region, Region, border with Uganda. Near the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**



Rangers are looking for an elephant. He was seen with a metal trap wrapped around one leg. The first attempt at anesthesia failed. It is a delicate operation because he is a member of a herd of approximately 100 individuals.

The incident occurred during a European delegation visit to the rangers' Simama outpost. The outpost was funded by the IFAW, the IUCN, CITES and the MIKE program (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants) as part of a 3-year project budgeted at 1.2 million euros (1.4 million US\$).

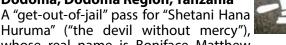
The border with the Democratic Republic of Congo is a major passage point for wildlife trafficking. For traffickers, Uganda is both a transit zone and a reservoir. According to Margret Driciru, park veterinarian, poaching is on the rise. Despite the development of tourism (except during Covid-19), illegal wildlife trade is growing. The Simama outpost is meant to help fight against that trend.

New Vision, August 1st, 2020.45

TANZANIA

Early July 2020

Dodoma, Dodoma Region, Tanzania



whose real name is Boniface Matthew Malyango (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°16 p. 77, n°18 p. 87 and n°23 p. 120). In the end, the courts decided that his 12-year prison sentence, as ruled in 2017, was not based on incontestable proof. His confessions regarding the hidden compartments in his car which enabled him to transport tusks

discretely was not consolidated by documents or other witnesses, and the splinters of ivory found in the car cannot be seriously taken into consideration because the car was searched several hours after the arrest and had not been sealed.

The annulment of the ruling, which had been applauded at the time by NGOs and part of public opinion, does not appear to be a case of collusion between the judges and the traffickers. Rather, it reflects the bad quality of some investigation files in which the relevant papers consist of partial and reversable confessions that are not confirmed by witnesses or conclusive exhibits.

Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, March 21, 2021.46

July 2020 Ruaha National Park, Tanzania

According to the head of park conservation, David Mlay, the reinforcement of safety measures, the arrests and the weapons seizures have finally put an end to poaching in conspiracy. Between 2014 and 2019, 30 elephants were killed and 1200 suspects arrested. Since 2019, 2 elephants have been killed, and they were outside of the park. Of the 215 people arrested, most were locals who were poaching for meat.

The Citizen, July 16, 2020.47

Early July 2020

Manyoni, Singida Region, Tanzania Joseph Barie, alias Mulda, Mefunya Daudi, alias Kitamboru, and Damiano Stanslaus, alias Clement, were sentenced to 20 years



in prison for possession of raw ivory and attempted trade. The two sentences are concurrent. The ruling ordered the confiscation of the 6 tusks by the State. Tanzania Daily News, July 14, 2020.48

Early August 2020

Manyoni, Singida Region, Tanzania Onesmo Daniel, alias Nyachiwa, alias Nyachivi, and Paul Rembris, alias



Teteyo, received double sentences of 20 years in prison for 2 charges: illegal possession and attempted ivory trade. The sentences are concurrent. The tusks were confiscated by the State. On May 31, 2018 around midnight, Onesmo Daniel was arrested in possession of the 6 tusks of 3 elephants, estimated to be worth 45,000 US\$. On September 9, 2018, Paul Rembris was arrested with 6 pieces of tusk from a single elephant, estimated at 15,000 US\$.

Tanzania Daily News, August 6, 2020.49

August 13, 2020

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, and Mtawanga, Lindi Region, Tanzania

Abdul Soud, Failuna Matunda, Yusuph Rashid, Joseph Elio, Catherine Mayinda and Abdallah Mwinyo were arraigned. They are suspected of having transported and been in possession of 24 pieces of tusk, worth an estimated total of 105,000 US\$.

Tanzania Daily News, September 8, 2020.50

July 27, 2020 Zambia



Four stools made of elephant feet were for sale online for 500 US\$ each. The seller indicated that he had killed the elephant in the 1970s in Zambia. Stools made of elephant feet, see "On the Trail" n°8 p.89, n°20 p.109 and 128, n°21 p.25, n°24 p.79, n°25 p.86 and 98.

Expose Trophy Hunting, July 28, 2020.⁵¹

Early August 2020 Lusaka Province, Zambia

Mulemwa Muyendekwa, 57-year-old businessman, Mufalo Somule, a 68 year-old real estate agent and former banker, Job Lunga, a 32-year-old student, and Joseph Chikumbe, a 54-year-old mason were arrested. They were taken by surprise on February 6 in possession of 25 elephant tusk sections weighing 110.4 kg and 2 hippopotamus teeth. Daily Mail, August 8, 2020.⁵²

ZIMBABWE

July 5, 2020

Chiredzi, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Asani Baloyi, 33 years old, apparently cut a tusk off the corpse of an elephant who had died in the Gonarezhou national park. He tried to sell the 6.7 kg of ivory estimated at 50,000 US\$. Rangers, disguised as buyers, arrested him.

The Mirror, July 9, 2020; New Zimbabwe, July 23, 2020.53

End of July 2020

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Similo Vundla, 53 years old, has been arraigned. He is pleading not guilty. The police and ZimParks rangers arrested him on March 14, 2020 at 8 p.m. He was transporting 4 tusks weighing on the whole 9.915 kg on his bicycle, near the Marist Brothers School in Dete. He was looking for a buyer. The Chronicle, July 28, 2020.⁵⁴

Early August 2020 Hwange National Park and Binga District,

Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe Enos Mudenda, Joseph Ngwenya and Mark Sibanda were arrested following a tip. They were in possession of 46.58 kg of ivory estimated at 11,395 US\$ (or 244.50 US\$/kg). They led the police to Binga, where other tusks were stored. New Zimbabwe, August 14, 2020.⁵⁵



August 24, 2020 Kariba, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe



A metal trap deeply embedded in an elephant calf's leg was removed. The operation lasted 45 minutes. Carl Nicholson, August 23, 2020.⁵⁶

August 28, 2020

Between Hwange and Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Several dozen elephant carcasses (22 to 40 depending on sources) lying, in most cases, near sources of water and in positions suggesting sudden death. The government is excluding cyanobacterial origins. An epidemic of hemorrhagic septicemia was suggested by the ZimParks director who, in application of the official doctrine on the Zimbabwean elephant population said, "This is just nothing, a drop in the ocean." Professor Keith Somerville, in charge of research at the universities of London and Kent and author for the Africa Conservation News website, noted that the samples taken and sent by the scientific authorities in Zimbabwe to laboratories in the United Kingdom are insufficient, and that the shipping conditions did not guarantee their conservation. The samples were stomach residues, trunk clippings, strips sterilized with formalin. "Sending inadequate samples will result in inadequate results," he concluded.

University of Kent, September 7, 2020; The Chronicle, September 13, 2020; ZwNews.com, September 14, 2020; Talking Humanities, September 10, 2020; Pieter Kat, September 22, 2020; Associated Press, September 28, 2020; Reuters, September 29, 2020.⁵⁷

September 8, 2020

Gwayi, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

An adult male elephant carcass was found. He had a bullet hole in his neck, but his tusks were intact. New Zimbabwe, September 11, 2020.⁵⁸

September 14, 2020

Siabuwa, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Million Humula, 79 years old, Jamu Munkuli, 44 years old, and London Muleya, 42 years old, were arrested. They fell into a trap as they tried to sell 4 tusks. According to the police, the tusks were fresh. The Herald, September 18, 2020.⁵⁹

Mid-September 2020 Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe



Craven Banda, formerly a football player with the Hwange club, was sentenced to

9 years in prison. He was arrested on May 24, 2020 with 9.405 kg of ivory (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.27). He stuck to his version of the facts, claiming that other people had left the bag of ivory at the back of the bus, and pleaded not guilty.

The Chronicle, September 23, 2020.60

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

FAMILY AFFAIRS July 1st and August 18, 2020 Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

- Glen Baadjies and Tanyan Jameza Gradwell have been arraigned. They were released on bail for 5,000 rand (298 US\$). They were arrested on July 12, 2019 in possession of 4 tusks, and released on bail at the time for 350 US\$.

- Their accomplice, Janine Erica Baadjies, was released with a warning. See "On the Trail" n° 26 p. 84. SAPS, August 19, 2020.⁶¹

August 4, 2020

Bramley, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Radius Mncube, Mkhululi Ngwenya and Mgcini Mncube, Zimbabweans, were arrested. They were trying to sell a tusk for 400,000 rand (22,820 US\$). IOL, August 7, 2020.⁶²

August 15, 2020 Zeerust, North West Province, South Africa

A young elephant had his trunk and mouth stuck in a tire. The locals reported him. The veterinarians and rangers freed him quickly. The area where his herd lives belongs to the local community. There have been no conflicts with humans. Wild elephants and tires, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 69, n°16 p. 84, n°24 p. 8, n°27 p. 84 and 95 and n°28 p.92).

News 24, August 15, 2020.63

August 16, 2020

Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa The elephant's trunk had a deep cut from

a metal trap. A team flew by helicopter to



the rescue. Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, August 17, 2020.⁶⁴

September 2 and 5, 2020 South Africa

Two young male elephants were treated by the veterinary NGO Saving the Survivors, one 3 days after the other:



- The first was spotted by tourist who noticed that he was having trouble walking. A metal trap was tightly wrapped around his front right leg.

- The second was also limping, but he had managed to free himself from the trap and the wound was in progress of healing.

Saving the Survivors, September 2 and 5, 2020.65

NAMIBIA

July 16, 2020

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

Johannes Angula Hosea and Petrus Kondjeni were arrested for illegal possession of 6 tusk sections. The Namibian Sun, July 24, 2020.⁶⁶

July 17, 2020

Opuwo and Outjo, Kunene Region, Namibia

- Muzadomure Rutjindo was arrested in possession of a tusk.

- Four arrests. Ngongo Tjiharuka, Iprencia Araes, Wesley Howab and Kambititi Tjiharuka were in possession of 3 tusks and 2 hunting rifles. The Namibian Sun, July 24, 2020.⁶⁷

July 21, 2020

Divundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia

Matheus Mukoya Katjire was arrested. He was in possession of 2 tusks.

The Nambian Sun, July 29, 2020.68

September 22, 2020

Mukwe, Kavango East Region, Namibia

Three arrests. Muaka Dinyando, Angolais, Bernard Moyo and Kamonga Thitamba were in possession of 2 tusks.

New Era, September 30, 2020; The Namibian Sun, October 1st, 2020.⁶⁹

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

July 24, 2020 New York, State of New York, United States of America

The latest thing in New York: a pair of stools made of elephant feet covered with a circle of zebra hide. The Department of Environmental Conservation seized them. A couple from Forest Hills had listed them for sale on Internet for 1,800 US\$.



Queens Daily Eagle, July 24, 2020.⁷⁰

September 23, 2020 - May 2021

Yulee, State of Florida, United States of America Plans are going well for transferring 34 circus Asian elephants, out of an 80-hectare enclosure in Polk City to a vast area of 1,011 hectares, including watering holes, prairies and marshes. The private domain for the former circus elephants is being organized by the White Oak Foundation, owners since 2011 of 6,879 hectares of land dedicated to taking in wild animals in difficulty. The park will be equipped with 3 healthcare shelters where, if need be, the male and female elephants, some of whom are between 60 and 70 years old, will receive the best possible veterinary care without being subjected to the physical and psychological ordeals of a transfer. The elephants came from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. They were removed from service in 2016. Some of them, too old and frail to be transferred, will remain in the Polk City enclosure, but in improved conditions since they will no longer suffer from overcrowding and the discomfort that goes with it. In Polk, to avoid injuries due to the lack of space, the ex-circus elephants are enchained for the night. In their White Oak park, they will be spared the shackles, of course.

In May, 2021, 35 elephants arrived safe and sound at the White Oak Conservation refuge in Yulee.



National Geographic, September 23, 2020; Wildlifeplanet.net, September 30, 2020; White Oak Conservation and CBS, May 2021.⁷¹

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

Mid-September 2020

São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil Seizure of approximately one hundred pieces of carved ivory from Africa worth an estimated total of 120,000 reais, or



20,750 US\$, in 11 auction rooms and art galleries.



The investigation started in the fall of 2019 during the antiques fair organized by the Sao Paulo art museum. The ivory pieces apparently come from a smuggling organization that works between the United States of America and Brazil. The sellers have already gotten a fine totaling 360,000 reais, or 65,380 US\$

R7, September 15, 2020.72

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

BEIJING MUNICIPALITY

July 9, 2020 Beijing Muncipality, China



Seizure of 800 g of ivory beads in a package coming from abroad, officially containing crafts made of metal.

Chinese Customs, July 29, 2020.73

August 2020 **Beijing Municipality, China**

Zhu received a 6-month suspended prison sentence and a fine of 2000 yuan (286 US\$) for having illegally purchased



2 ivory amulets priced at 650 and 800 yuan (92 and 114 US\$) from a cousin who worked in a travel agency. Zhu wanted his wife to wear ivory because, according to him, it would keep away "evil spirits".

The judge's ruling is full of common sense. Firstly, "Many buyers are like Zhu. They believe that ivory objects can chase away evil spirits, protect their bodies, be used as medicine. And yet, the chemical composition of human teeth and elephant teeth is the same. We are all, or nearly, wearing ivory and adding a tooth "from outside" adds nothing other than an esthetic variant."

Secondly, "The elephant's own experience demonstrates that ivory cannot chase away evil spirits, since countless elephants are brutally killed, and their ivory has no healing power either since in reality elephants die from poachers' poisons." "The only power that ivory has is exposing people like Zhu who buy it to prison sentences and fines." New QQ, August 22, 2020.74

SHANGHAI MUNICIPALITY

August 2020 Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China



Customs seizure in a sea container of 14 painting scroll tips with a total weight of 406 g and 6 kg of rosewood (Dalbergia spp., Appendix II). Chinese Customs, November 30 and December 5, 2020.75

TIANJIN MUNICIPALITY

Mid-July 2020 Tianjin Tianjin Port, Muncipality, China

Seizure on a cargo ship, in the baggage of a Chinese sailor, of 15 pieces carved ivories, including 10 bracelets. Chinese Customs, July 28, 2020.76



FUJIAN PROVINCE

30 July 2020 Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China

Sentencing of Zheng Xinchun to 15 years imprisonment and confiscation of his assets to the amount of 2.5 million yuan,



or 352,000 US\$ for running a network of smuggling and illegal sale of raw ivory from the year 2015. His main supplier was Wang, a resident of Maoming in Guangdong province. Batches of raw ivory were transported by truck to Xianyou, Fujian province and resold to illegal carving workshops that transformed them into worked ivory. According to the investigation file, the Zheng network sucked up 5,222 kg of ivory with an estimated value of 215 million yuan or 30 million US\$ and 5,740 US\$/kg. China News Network, July 31, 2020; Fuzhou News

Network, July 3, 2020.77

September 9, 2020

Xiamen-Gaoqi International Airport, Fujian Province, China

Seizure of 3 carved ivories weighing a total of 175.4 q.

Chinese Customs, September 14, 2020.79

September 13, 2020

Fuzhou Changle International Airport, Fujian **Province**, China

Seizure of a necklace (67.4 g) in the belongings of a Chinese passenger. Chinese Customs, September 14, 2020.80

GUANGDONG PROVINCE

July 20, 2020 Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, **Guangdong Province, China**

Several successive seizures in an afternoon: 5 bracelets (258 g) and 2 other pieces of carved ivory (28 and 39 g) in the luggage of 3 passengers. Chinese Customs, July 29, 2020.81

July 31, 2020

Guangzhou-Baivun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure coming off a flight from Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, of approximately 20 pieces of carved or semi-raw ivory, 700 g in the whole, wrapped in metal sheets and covered with clothing. Chinese Customs, August 11, 2020.82

August 12, 2020

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

Seizure in the luggage of a passenger coming off a flight from Istanbul, one ivory bracelet, 51.9 g. To explain the problem in his suitcase as view on the security scanner screen, the man took a wooden bracelet out of his suitcase. The ivory bracelet was under the wooden bracelet.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2020.83

August 13, 2020

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure by postal customs services, in a package coming from abroad, of a bracelet presumedly in ivory, among other jewelry in jade that was officially declared. Eleven days later, the center for the identification of wildlife species confirmed that the bracelet was made of elephant ivory, 29 g. Chinese Customs, September 3, 2020.⁸⁴

August 19 and 21, 2020 Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China



- Seizure after a Turkish Airlines flight landed from Istanbul, of 17 pieces of jewelry in the luggage of 6 different passengers, 900 g.

- Seizure after an Egypt Air flight landed from Cairo, of 6 pieces of jewelry in the luggage of 3 different passengers, 400 g.

Since the beginning of 2019, a total of 14 kg of chop sticks, stamps, figurines, chess pieces made of ivory have been seized at the airport. China News, August 28, 2020.⁸⁵

September 25, 2020 Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure, the day before the national holiday and the fall celebration, of 23 bracelets, pendants and other jewelry in the luggage of a Chinese citizen coming back from abroad.

Chinese Customs, October 6, 2020.86

GUANGXI ZHUANG AUTONOMOUS REGION

August 11, 2020

Qinzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

When the crew changed on a cargo ship flying a foreign flag, the harbor customs office seized bracelets, chop sticks, rings and combs made of ivory, 15 articles in all weighing a total of 536.6 g. Chinese Customs, August 15, 2020.⁸⁷

August 17, 2020 Dongxing, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of a bracelet in the belongings of a foreign citizen, 17.52 g.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2020.88

September 15, 2020 Shuikou, Guangyi Zhua

Shuikou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.

Customs officers seized 196 pieces of semi-raw ivory totaling 12.55 kg, and turned them over to the Chongzuo local office of the Ministry of Forests. Chinese Customs, September 19, 2020.⁸⁹



HEBEI PROVINCE

July 3, 2020 Lubei, Hebei Province, China

Seizure of 200 carved ivories, beads, bracelets and other amulets in a shop. The shopkeeper, Madame Li, is in custody while the investigation continues and until her trial. As a reminder, since January 1, 2018, raw ivory and carved ivory cannot be sold, transported or made anywhere in China. Tangshanyinxiang, July 14, 2020.⁹⁰

HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

July 26, 2020 Youyi, Heilongjiang Province, China Customs officers seized a pendant, 20 g. Chinese Customs, July 30, 2020.⁹¹

JIANGSU PROVINCE

August 1st, 2020 Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

Between January and July 2020, 28 pieces of carved ivory weighing a total of 6.7 kg were seized by airport customs. Xxcb.cn, August 14, 2020.⁹³

LIAONING PROVINCE

Early August 2020

Tiexi District, Liaoning Province, China

M. Dagang received a one-year suspended sentence and a fine of 20,000 yuan (2855 US\$); his accomplice, Mme



Xiaohua got a 3-month suspended sentence and a fine of 5,000 yuan (714 US\$). In Beijing and Guangzhou, they purchased 23 objects made of elephant ivory and tried to sell them in the historic district of Anshan, in the province of Liaoning. The ivory of 27 other objects could not be identified. It was not elephant ivory.

New.qq.com, August 13, 2020.94

SHAANXI PROVINCE

End of August 2020

Hantai District, Shaanxi Province, China

Lin was arraigned for, in October and December 2018, having purchased 4 pieces of carved ivory from a jade figurine wholesaler, and having put them up for sale in his jade and gems shop. The 2 pendants and the beads were seized in September 2019. They weigh 79 g and their estimated value is 3300 yuan (470 US\$). Jcrb.com, August 24, 2020.⁹⁵

SHANDONG PROVINCE

Early September 2020 Yantai Port, Shandong Province, China Seizure in the luggage of a crew member, on a

cargo ship flying a foreign flag, of 2 bracelets and a necklace totaling 200 g. Chinese Customs, September 2, 2020.⁹⁶

September 9, 2020

Jinan, Shandong Province, China Seizure of a necklace (30 g) in a parcel coming from Germany. Chinese Customs, September 11, 2020.⁹⁷

YUNNAN PROVINCE

August 20, 2020 Daluo, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Viet Nam. Seizure in a vehicle of a suspected ivory necklace weighing 69 g. Chinese Customs, August 24, 2020.⁹⁸





4.9 kg of bracelets, necklaces, statuettes, other worked ivories seized in China between July 1 and September 30, 2020

ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

July 17, 2020 Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of 2 painting scrolls with ivory tips, 54g, in a package from Hong Kong. Chinese Customs, July 29, 2020.⁹⁹



August 19, 2020

Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China Another seizure of 4 painting scrolls with ivory tips, 109 g.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2020.¹⁰⁰

August 25, 2020

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China



Seizure of a bracelet by 2 customs agents in full anti-Covid attire. Chinese Customs, August 28, 2020.¹⁰¹

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF HONG KONG

September 10, 2020 Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China



A businessman was sentenced to 2 years in prison for illegal possession of 20 kg of carved ivory and 35 kg of raw ivory. TOPick, September 10, 2020.¹⁰²

JAPAN

End of August 2020

Japan

NGOs and African countries have sent letters to Yuriko Koike, the governor of Tokyo. They are asking him to ban the ivory trade in Tokyo. Japan authorizes "strictly regulated" interior ivory trade. But that is not enough to stop illegal exports. Since 2018, China has seized ivory objects coming from Japan at least 65 times (see especially "On the Trail" n°5 p.100, n°6 p.90, n°8 p.87, n°9 p. 84 and 85, n°10 p.65, n°11 p.66, n°14 p.90, n°19 p.104, n°20 p.103, n°23 p.128, n°24 p.76 and 88, n°25 p.91, 92 and 112, n°26 p. 89 and 90, n°27 p.103 and 105, n°28 p.108 and 110). In January, the government created a commission to examine the subject. With the Covid-19 pandemic, negotiations have made no progress. Japanese companies like Yahoo! Japan and Aeon have taken the initiative of no longer selling ivory. The Tokyo Olympic Games were cause for concern from NGOs. They would have given tourists a good excuse to go back home with ivory souvenirs apart from the fact they have been barred at the end from coming.

Guancha, August 20, 2020; Humane Society International, June 26, 2020.¹⁰³

TAIWAN

July 2020

Taipei, Taiwan

The Public Prosecutor's Office is taking legal action against the executive director of Yuzhen, the country's historic auction leader. She had agreed in January and May 2019 to exhibit and offer at auction jasper vases with piece of ivory and worked ivories. All of these legally contentious items were seized. The 2 people who supplied the ivory items to Yuzhen have also been charged by the courts.

Ban on the sale of ivory in Taiwan, see "On the Trail" n°22 p.101.

United Daily News, July 6, 2020; China Times, July 6, 2020.¹⁰⁴

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

July 1st and 2, 2020

Sei Rampah, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra Province, and Paku Satu, Indragiri Hulu Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

- Ucok, 52 years old, was arrested. He is accused of having participated in the shooting death of an elephant. The carcass was found on April 15, his trunk cut off, on a plantation ency. Ucok has been in prison once before, for killing an elephant in 2015.

- His accomplice, Sukar, 29 years old, has also been arrested.

At Ucok and Sukar's house, police seized a pair of tusks weighing 7 kg in a whole and an elephant skull, a hunting rifle, cartridges, an ax, a knife and a flashlight. The suspects planned to sell the tusks for the equivalent of 275 US\$/kg.

The Jakarta Post, August 5, 2020. 106

September 9, 2020

Pidie Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

An elephant died on a community plantation The circumstances of the incident remain mysterious. The only thing that is certain is that he suffered from a serious injury on his leg. Perhaps a trap. The Jakarta Post, September 10, 2020.¹⁰⁷

September 23, 2020 Pringsewu Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Two tusks around 50 cm long, 9 ivory pipes and 3 elephant molars, all were seized in a hotel. Three individuals identified by their initials BT, TW and AS were arrested.

The Jakarta Post, September 24, 2020.¹⁰⁸

September 2020 Lanchang, State of Pahang, Malaysia



MALAYSIA

She fell into a trap 3 years ago. Her right front leg was crushed. There was no choice but to amputate it. Thanks to the good care of the veterinary team of the NECC (National Elephant Conservation



Centre) and the contribution of the Exim Bank (Export-Import Bank of Malaysia), she rests on a prosthesis and under the guidance of her mahout goes regularly for a walk in the forest. The prosthesis must be changed every 4 months as long as Elly grows.

The Star, November 8, 2020.¹⁰⁹

SINGAPORE

August 11, 2020 Singapore

The Singapore National Parks services destroyed 9 tons of ivory on the day before World Elephant Day. The economic value is estimated at over 13 million US\$, or 1,450 US\$/kg. Netizens could watch the event live on the National Parks Youtube channel. Of the 9 tons, 8.8 were seized in July 2019. See "On the Trail" n°26 p. 52.

National Parks, August 11, 2020; CBC, August 11, 2020.¹¹⁰

THAILAND

August 8, 2020

Kinnaree Elephant Camp, Phuket Province, Thailand

Thung Nun, a 60- to 70-year-old female elephant, went to live at the sanctuary of the NGO Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand. Her owner could no longer afford to feed her. Thung Nun was employed for 25 to take people for rides. She is thin, blind in one eye and has trouble eating.

Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, August 8, 2020.111

September 1st, 2020 Tha Mai Ruak, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand



"Boon Ma" looks good for 70 years old, or a little more or a little less. She is used to carrying heavy loads; 30 years of service in the wood industry and 10 in tourism. She has been taken in at the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand refuge after a long trip from the south of Thailand in a truck. She was accompanied by her mahout, who has been taking care of her since she was domesticated. In just the month of August, the WFFT took in 4 new elephants. More and more elephants are being abandoned by recreational parks that have gone bankrupt, one after another, because of the Covid crisis and the absence of international tourists. There are 3000 captive elephants in Thailand. Boon Ma's mahout is also going to take care of the 28 other elephants to whom the WFFT has given a home.

WFFT, August 28 and September 1st, 2020.¹¹²

September 14, 2020

Namtok Sipo National Park, Narathiwat Province, Thailand



A dead elephant was drifting in a canal. The park authorities were informed by a local official. The elephant was pulled out onto the banks. He was decapitated and his tail cut. He was around 15 years old. He had been shot.

The Nation, September 17, 2020.113

September 23, 2020

Near the Khao Yai National Park, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand A wild elephant, about 30 years old,



died of electrocution when he came too close to a recreational and camping site located 200 m from the park limits. The cables that bring electricity to the camping trailers are not buried. The park authorities pressed charges.

Bangkok Post, September 23, 2020.¹¹⁴

VIET NAM

September 30, 2019, and July 16, 2020 Phu Dong and Gia Lam District, Hanoi, Viet Nam



On September 30, 2019, the police conduct the search of 2 parked vehicles.

When asked to empty their bags, Duong Van Phong and Nguyen Van Nam try to escape. They were carrying 204 kg of ivory. The buyer(s) were not caught in the trap. Nguyen Van Hung, who had managed to escape, surrendered to the police in Lang Son province.

Phong said he met a Chinese man who was willing to buy ivory on the basis of 540 US\$/kg. Phong then approached Nam. Nam quickly climbed the ranks of the trafficking corporation. From a small wildlife broker in 2016, he became a wholesaler able to gather tonnes of ivory and dozens of rhino horns in 2020.

Phong and Nam were sentenced to 11 years in prison, Hung to 10 years in prison, by the Hanoi People's Court.

Vietnam plus, July 17, 2020; VN Express, July 17, 2020.¹¹⁵

Weef of July 27, 2020 Kien Giang Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 1.88 kg and 0.35 kg of articles made of ivory.

ENV, July 31, 2020.116



INDIA

FAMILY AFFAIRS July 2, 2020

Thekkampatti, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

An elephant, 18 to 20 years old, was found dead, shot in the head. K. Ramasamy and his brother, K. Krishnasamy, were arrested. The police seized a home-made firearm. They said they had killed the elephant because she was destroying their crops. An elephant calf, under one year old, was sighted close by. 141 elephants have died in the district since 2011, including 14 since the beginning of the year.

The Times of India, July 2 and 3, 2020; The Hindu, July 2, 2020.¹¹⁷

July 5, 2020 Agali Forest, Palakkad District, State of Kerala, India



A 5-year-old elephant has died. His jaw was fractured and his tongue split. He also suffered from pneumonia and a stomach tumor. He was incapable of eating. He apparently bit into a fruit full of explosives a few days earlier. The Daily Star, July 6, 2020.¹¹⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE July 9, 2020

Mangpu, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India

Following a tip, forest rangers caught 5 people in the middle of a negotiation. Three of them managed to flee. Sobha Tamang and Som Tshering Tamang were arrested. A piece of tusk weighing between 500 and 700 g, a car, some credit cards, some foreign currency and cell phones were seized. The 2 suspects planned to smuggle the ivory into Nepal. They are part of an international network and are known to have been involved in smuggling pangolin scales.

The Telegraph India, July 11, 2020; The Siliguri Times, July 10, 2020.119

July 14, 2020

Betla National Park, State of Jharkhand, India

A female elephant carcass was found. Despite a deep wound to her head, the autopsy attributed her death to liver disease. Saryu Rai, a politician committed to environmental protection, has asked the Prime Minister of the State for a detailed investigation. In his opinion, the wound is not natural. He has also accused forest rangers of covering up the recent death of a female tiger.

Punjab News Express, July 20, 2020.120

July 21, 2020

Lucknow, Lucknow District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

A tusk weighing 13 kg was seized and 4 traffickers were arrested by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and police Special Task Force. WCCB, July 22, 2020.¹²¹

July 22, 2020 Bamandanga, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India



This morning, the corpse of an elephant was found; he had been electrocuted by the fence around a tea plantation. The Siliguri Times, July 22, 2020.¹²²

July 22, 2020

Bilikkal Reserve Forest, Krishnagiri District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

E. Thammanna, is under arrest. He is accused of having taken the tusks off of a 20-year-old elephant who died naturally on July 16. The tusks were confiscated.

The New Indian Express, July 23, 2020.123

July 27, 2020

Nagrakata, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India

Suspicious death of an elephant on the Hila tea plantation. He was part of a herd that came out of the Jaldhaka forest during the night. At dawn, the villagers discovered the carcass and notified the Khuniya office of the Department of Forests. The Siliguri Times, July 27, 2020.¹²⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS

July 27, 2020 Sarkatta, Dhamtari District, State of Chhattisgarh, India



Electrocutions often lead to ivory trafficking. Chain Singh Markam and his sons, Ranjeet and Sanjeet, were arrested. Ranjeet was trying to sell 2 tusks 50 cm long. His mother told the police everything. Five years earlier, a young elephant was electrocuted by the fence around their field. They cut the body in 2 and buried it. No one knew about it. Two years later, they dug up the tusks to sell them.

Eight elephants have died in Chhattisgarh since the beginning of the month of June. At least 3 of them were electrocuted. The farmers were interrogated. 44 elephants have been electrocuted in Chhattisgarh in the past 10 years.

Hindustan Times, July 28, 2020; The Times of India, June 18 and July 24 and 27, 2020.¹²⁵

July 29, 2020 Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Two motorcycles were stopped on the road from Sathyamangalam to Athani. The police found 2 tusks in a burlap bag. With information from the drivers, the police picked up 2 other suspects. T. Palanis-



amy, A. Angappan, V. Andavan and M. Govindarajan would have taken the tusks from the carcass of a 40-year-old male who had apparently died naturally 20 days earlier.

A few days before, a 35-year-old male was electrocuted in the same district. Police are looking for the owner of the field.

The Times of India, July 18, 30 and 31, 2020; The Hindu, July 30, 2020.¹²⁶

August 8, 2020

Tiruchengode, Namakkal District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Sathish Kumar and Vijay Kumar were arrested. At their home, forest rangers found a pair of tusks 70 cm long and weighing 2.5 kg. They allegedly cut them off an elephant who was 15 to 17 years old. The suspects had them in their possession for over 6 months. They were trying to sell them.

The Hindu, August 8, 2020.127

Mid-August 2020

Narsinghpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Two elephants poached. The Daily Pioneer, August 15, 2020.¹²⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS

August 23 and 24, 2020

Khagrabari and Daimuguri-Laimuti, Chirang District, State of Assam, India

The police were tracking a network of smugglers. - Alen Basumatary was arrested. Seizure of a telephone that may be useful for the investigation. Two tusks weighing a total of 10 kg were found thanks to the information he gave.

- Jorebangal Basumatary was arrested. Forest rangers found 2 tusks weighing a total of 7 kg in his home. The economic value of the 4 tusks is estimated at Rs 10 lakh (11,371 US\$, or 669 US\$/kg). According to the police, they are from elephants who were killed in the Manas and Ultapani forests. The smugglers planned to sell them in China and in Myanmar, by passing through Nepal. The Covid-19 lockdown kept them from traveling. Other tusks are allegedly hidden near the border with Nepal and Bhutan. NorthEast Now, August 24 and 25, 2020; The Times of India, August 25, 2020.¹²⁹

August 30, 2020

Baraut, Baghpat District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Navin, Tushar and Virendra were arrested. They were in possession of one tusk. Outlook India, August 30, 2020.¹³⁰

August 31, 2020

Bayapita, Kendujhar District, State of Odisha, India

Forest rangers posed as ivory buyers. After negotiating for 2 months, an appointment was fixed. Three people were arrested near a dhaba (roadside restaurant, often near a gas station). The agents seized 14 pieces of ivory weighing a total of 19.6 kg. The suspects are allegedly middlemen.

The Times of India, September 1st, 2020; The Hindu, September 1st, 2020; Deccan Chronicle, September 2, 2020.¹³¹

September 1st, 2020 Puttila, Dakshina Kannada District, State of Karnataka, India



One male electrocuted. The Department of Forests is investigating. The Times of India, September 1st, 2020.¹³²

September 1st, 2020

Kunhome, Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India Two tusks weighing a little over 10 kg each were seized from a split in a tree trunk in the Chappathode forest. K. Vinod, K. Raghavan, K. Raju and K. Gopi had been hiding them there for 18 months. They claim to have "collected" them from an elephant who had died naturally. The case needs clarification! The Hindu, September 3, 2020.¹³³

September 2, 2020

Pandanthorai, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

A 40-year-old elephant was found dead at the junction of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, in an isolated forest. According to the 2 veterinarians who did the autopsy, he had not eaten anything in 5 days and had been suffering for 3 months from a deep wound in his hind right leg, where he had been shot with a rifle. Poaching is not suspected since his tusks were in place. The authorities did not mentionned an elephant's frantic escape from poachers who would have been unable to finish him off on the spot and take his tusks. According to official account, farmers in Gudalur shot the elephant to keep him out of their fields.

The New Indian Express, September 4, 2020.134

September 2, 2020

Oxiguri, Manas National Park, Chirang District, State of Assam, India

A 40-year-old female elephant was shot and killed. She died a few days ago. Her body was buried on site. Northeast Now, September 3, 2020.¹³⁵

September 6, 2020

Ashrabari, Chirang District, State of Assam, India

Arrest of an elephant killer, Dafla alias Uttam Narzary. The crime took place in April. They were 2 to commit it. The other, a man named Samir, had already been arrested and in retaliation the Ultapani forest range premises had been ransacked. A tusk of the victim had been sold for 21,000 rupees (286 US\$) to Jore Bangal alias Jibeswar Basumatary who was also arrested.

Northeast Now, September 6, 2020.136

September 7, 2020

Baksa District, State of Assam, India. India-Bhutan border

Lankeswar Basumatari, Binod Basumatari and Madan Gayari were arrested. Seizure of 2 tusks, a deer's antler and a home-made shotgun. The animals were apparently poached 2 weeks ago in the Jamguri forest.

IND Forums, September 7, 2020.¹³⁷

August 21 and September 9, 2020 Sholayur, Palakkad District, State of Kerala, India



The "makna" (a tuskless male) died after 3 weeks of suffering caused by eating fruit or some other bait packed with explosives. His tongue was twisted, his glottis was torn out, his teeth were disintegrated, he was anesthetized by the Kerala vets on August 22. They gave him antibiotics and other useful medicine, they announced a very pessimistic prognosis. It was more about easing his pain, rather than curing "Bulldozer," as the locals called him. The "makna" had torn down a few huts, looking for flour, but had never been a threat to human life. The villagers of Attapady held a religious tribute to him before his body was lowered into the ground by a crane, near the lake where he went to drink from time to time. Water was the only thing he could swallow after the attack. "Bulldozer" came and went between Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where explosive traps are used relatively frequently.

The Times of India, August 24 and 27, 2020; The Hindu, August 24, 2020, September 2, 9 and 10, 2020.¹³⁸

September 11, 2020

Barabanki Reserve Forest, Kendujhar District, State of Odisha, India

She was the 5th *Elephas maximus* to die in the district since the beginning of the year. She was 3 years old. Villagers found her when they went to pick mushrooms. She was buried on the spot, incognito, by forest rangers from the local division, and the box "died of unknown causes" was quickly checked. But people talk in villages, and it soon became common knowledge that the little one was the victim of a poacher's accidental fire. The bullet that killed her was, in fact, meant for the male in the herd going peacefully into the forest, which is theoretically a protected zone, to look for food. The forest rangers decided on a speedy burial for the victim to hide the poaching incident from their superior officers. Their boss, a certain Ghanashyam Mahanta, was relieved of his functions 3 years ago in the Angul district for having tried to hide the violent death of an honorable tigress who had never done anyone any harm.

The Daily Pioneer, September 14, 2020; The Orissa Post, September 11, 2020.¹³⁹

September 14, 2020 Pirakata, Paschim Medinipur District, State of West Bengal, India

Death of a male by electrocution. The



farmers in the area are often sabotage electricians. They scrupulously plant their fields on elephants' paths, and protect their vegetables and grains at night by laying electric cables hooked up the public grid, then pack up the cables for the day. In Tamil Nadu, baits explode in the elephants' mouths; in West Bengal, 15,000 volts fry them. Three days earlier, an elephant calf had drowned in the river Tamal in unknown circumstances. His body floated down the river and got caught in a fisherman's net.

The Telegraph India, September 15, 2020.¹⁴⁰

September 19, 2020 Saranda Forest, West Singhbhum District, State of Jharkhand, India



Electrocution of a 6-year-old elephant for the edge of a rice paddy. His tusks were found hidden near the carcass. Officially, electricity is used to keep wild animals out of the fields. Unofficially, it is also very useful for poaching.

The Times of India, September 21, 2020.141

September 24, 2020

Joynagar, Nagaon District, State of Assam, India

The police, acting on a tip, arrested Abdullah Ahmed and Saifuddin Ahmed as they were about to sell a tusk weighing 0.848 kg.

Northeast Now, September 25, 2020.142

September 25 and 27, 2020 Kishanpur and Rampur, Mahasamund District, State of Chhattisgarh, India A female elephant stepped on an electric



cable. Seven suspects were arrested. Regulars in electric poaching, they admitted in addition to having struck down a sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I). His remains were found with help from the canine brigade.

Deccan Herald from Press Trust of India, September 27, 2020.¹⁴³

September 26, 2020 Rani Bakarapara, Kamrup Metropolitan District, State of Assam, India



Two dead by electrocution. According to the investigation, the 2 elephants had come out of their forest. One of them, on a public path, tried to tear off a bamboo shoot to which was attached a bare medium voltage electric cable. The short circuit occurred under the trunk. The 2nd elephant wanted to help his friend and was electrocuted in the same way.



The 2 victims received homage and prayers from the locals, before being buried in a damp pit, sprinkled with salt and lime. Between 2011 and 2021, 100 elephants were fatally electrocuted in Assam. The Sentinel, September 27, 2020; India Today,

September 26, 2020.¹⁴⁴

September 28, 2020

Dalijoda Reserve Forest, Cuttak District, State of Odisha, India

An elephant died after 4 days of intensive care, having been ambushed by armed poachers. He managed to flee despite serious injury to one leg. He still had his tusks when the veterinarians took him in for treatment.

The Telegraph India, September 29, 2020.145

September 30, 2020

Jharbari, Kokrajhar District, State of Assam, India Two tusks hidden in the forest were seized and 4 poachers were arrested. The operation, which took place about 40 kilometers from the Bhutan border, was carried out by the SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal), the armed forces deployed along the border with

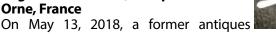
Bhutan and the local police.

The Assam Tribune, October 2, 2020.¹⁴⁶

WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

September 22, 2020 Bagnoles-de-l'Orne, Department of Orne, France



dealer was hawking carved ivories at the

Andaines fair (see "On the Trail" n°25 p. 119), one of the largest antiques fairs in the West of France. The ivory was seized by OFB (French Biodiversity Office) agents because the man could not provide the certificates that would have proven that they were legal antiques. Two and a half years later, the court confirmed the validity of the seizure.

Ouest France, September 23, 2020; Le Publicateur Libre, September 24, 2020.¹⁴⁷

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

End of August 2020 Valencia, Province of Valencia, Valencian Community, Spain

A 27-year-old woman was selling a tusk on a wooden base. Agents from the Guardia Civil contacted her under cover. She also had 2 other raw tusks. She could not show any document attesting to their legal origin. The agents arrested her and seized the 3 tusks.

El Periodico, August 26, 2020.148

ITALY

Early August 2020 Turin, Piedmont Region, Italy

In their apartment on Corso Giulio Cesare, two 30-year-old Chinese citizens had a showcase containing tusks and statuettes in ivory, and jewelry made of red coral and elephant ivory, with price labels, but no documents of origin. Men from the Guardia di Finanza came for a visit and emptied the showroom. The search was initiated by the prosecutor of the Piedmontse capital. He had been informed by an anonymous and documented tip. SkyTG24, August 6, 2020; Campobello News, August 6, 2020; Quotidiano Piemontese, August 6, 2020.¹⁴⁹

EASTERN EUROPE

HUNGARY

August 17, 2020

Szada, Pest County, Hungary

The Casselly troop was crossing Hungary with their circus. When they arrived at their Safari park in Szada, they left 5 elephants closed up in their 2 vans, despite stifling, stormy weather. Mambo and Betty died of suffocation. Tonga was rescued in the nick of time. The carcasses were buried immediately. René Casselly publicly announced the elephants' death 2 months after the tragic turn. He claimed that the elephants

were buried quickly and without an autopsy and announcement because he was in mourning. The Gödöllo police initiated an investigation for cruelty to animals. They discovered that Mambo and Betty's tusks were cut off before they were buried.

World Animals Voice, October 22, 2020; Blikk, November 17, 2020.¹⁵⁰

OCEANIA

NEW ZEALAND

End of August 2020 New Zealand

Seizure of a cabinet made in 1862 and coming off of a boat from the United Kingdom. It was decorated with ivory. It was worth an estimated 150,000 NZ\$ (100,000 US\$). According to the buyer, Patrick Soanes, the English authorities did not stamp the permit required to import ivory and refused to do it retrospectively. The Minister of Conservation sees several options: destroy the cabinet, remove the ivory or give it to a museum. Newshub, August 30, 2020.¹⁵¹

September 2020 New Zealand

Anti-ivory barriers reinforced. The legislation on the trade of protected animals passed in 1989 will be amended after the next legislative elections and the establishment of the new parliament. The current Minister of Conservation is basing the amendment on public consultation which took place in September 2019 and on recommendations from members of parliament. "Currently there are no restrictions on domestic trade in elephant ivory in New Zealand. This is out of step with many countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, France, and China which have already banned domestic trade in elephant ivory."

The amendment to the 1989 law will ban the import and export of elephant ivory of any kind, with the exception of antiques which can be authenticated by experts. If necessary, carbon 14 dating and genetic analysis will be possible to enable museums to buy and sell pieces. Antique musical instruments with documents and certificates of origin will be exempt from the ban. More news soon.

New Zealand and ivory, see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 55, n°5 p. 104, n°11 p. 81, n°12 p. 90, n°22 p. 102. New Zealand Ministry of Conservation, September 8, 2020.¹⁵²

DIVAGATION UNDERWAY

This is the first Covid lockdown of March 2020. About 15 elephants residing in the Mengyang reserve in the upper Mekong river basin are surprised by the total absence of tourists. The Wild Elephant Valley is deserted. Nobody to feed them. The wardens are sporadic and masked. The virus is suspected of being everywhere, even in the elephants' trunks. Until then, they had been pampered, a little pervaded by human trickery. The old elephants could testify to this if they had a Tintin at hand who understood the elephant dialect. They could tell that, some 40 years ago, they were baited with the salt that was made available to them in profusion in order to hold them back and encourage them to breed in this tropical showcase visited by thousands of package tours every year. At the risk of catching a cold, the runaway elephants take the north road. In the south, "tropicality" does not rhyme with hospitality. The Wild Elephant Valley stands alongside Myanmar and Laos. In this golden triangle of poaching and smuggling, the ivory and skin markets are flourishing. In Menghai county and counties nearby, the shop windows were full of worked ivories until 2018. Now they circulate under the table, and in March 2020, at a local market, fragments of elephant skin smuggled from Myanmar were seized by masked and gloved customs officials from the stall of a female seller of bear bile and porcupine stomachs. In 2014, within range of the Mengyang reserve, a fire of automatic weapons sounded and the body of a male elephant was found. The tusks had been cut off with a chainsaw. The last known poaching events were in 2012, 2008 and 2007.

For more than a year, the escapade was almost silent. It was not publicised. The forest services did their utmost to mark out their route with bales of fodder.

Early June 2021, they were put in the spotlight, caught by the pack and staged. They stop, they take a nap, they devastate a field, they leave again, they silently cross a deserted street in single file, they approach the fire brigade's water bowser. The drones look down on them. The matter is being followed very closely by Beijing. China takes the opportunity to restore its image and confirm at any cost its recent vocation as a defender of wild elephants.

On July 5, 2021, a male elephant aged about 10 who had strayed from the herd was anaesthetised and taken by truck 500 km south in the Mengyang reserve. The anaesthesia and recovery with antidote were practiced by a veterinarian from the "Asian Elephant Breeding and Rescue Center in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture ".

The Xishuangbanna Biosphere Reserve covers 2,425 km² and has benefited from the Unesco recognition since 1990. It is divided into 5 sub-reserves including the Mengyang reserve.

To be continued!

Elephants in Yunnan, cf. On the Trail" n°7 p.90, n°9 p.87, n°14 p.89, n°15 p.43 and p.92, n°16 p.102, n°17 p.100, n°20 p.102, n°21 p.116, n°22 p.117, n°23 p.69, p.112 and p.154, n°25 p.93, n°26 p.91, n°27 p.63 and p.105, n°28 p.128. Sources: Le Parisien, June 5, 2021; China Daily, July 8, 2021; "Xishuangbanna Biosphere Reserve, China", UNESCO, July 2019.¹⁵³

ELEPHANTS AND RHINOCEROSES



AFRICA

KENYA

July 29, 2020

Moi International Airport, Mombasa County, Kenya

"Wananionea, mimi sijafanya kitu" ("They are implicating me, I am innocent"). Mansur Mohamed Surur, alias Mansour, 60 years old, got picked up at Moi International Airport coming off a flight from Yemen. The US justice has accused him of trafficking ivory, rhinoceros horns and narcotics. With 2 accomplices who are already in prison in New York and a third who is still on the run, he was identified by "C1," a member of US special services to whom he confided, confirmed and proved that he could ship good-sized horns (7 kg) and heroine from Africa to Manhattan. Interpol stuck a red notice on him. He had been under surveillance for 2 years and interrogated by the Kenyan authorities when he moved to South Sudan, then to Sudan, before flying to Yemen, where he found himself in a haven of peace and security despite the civil war, since there are no extradition treaties between Yemen, Kenya and the United States of America.

Mansour's lawyers are trying to get him released on bail and fighting for a trial in Kenya, although the United States has made a request for extradition. See "On the Trail" n°25 p. 81.

Capital FM, July 29, 2020; The Star, July 29, 2020; Daily Nation, August 3, 2020.¹

ASIA

TURKEY

August 6, 2020

Izmir, Izmir Province, Aegean Region, and Antalya, Antalya Province, Mediterranean Region, Turkey

Twelve arrests. The gang leader is known as Osman G. Seizure of bullet-proof vests, 12 firearms, silencers, a laser finder, rosaries and pearls made of elephant ivory, rhinoceros horns or fragments, python skins and 14 works of art. The multi-skilled traffickers had been in sight of the police for 2 years. Hürriyet, August 14, 2020.³



RHINOCEROSES



Indian rhinoceros (Rhinoceros unicornis), Bharatpur, Madhyamanchal, Nepal. Photo 123_456

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

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: the Indian rhinoceros Rhinoceros unicornis, the Sumatran rhinoceros Dicerorhinus sumatrensis, and the Javan rhinoceros Rhinoceros sondaicus.

On the Trail n°30 Black market horn quotation from media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)	
Africa	Kenya	21,860	4 (2015)	
		15,080	5 (2020)	
	South Africa	3,708	9 (2020)	

Value of 1kg of raw horn

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

July 16, 2020

Sera Wildlife Conservancy, Samburu County, Kenya

A rhinoceros orphan was bottle-fed at Reteti, then taught to keep himself, before being released at the Sera Conservancy. Very soon, his gaunt appearance and chronic diarrhea became apparent. His excrements contained fragments of plastic. He was given a deworming treatment, antibiotics, stimulants and anti-inflammatories. He is convalescing in the rangers' fenced camp. The prognosis is very uncertain. He has to be kept away from the garbage dumps where he took to eating after he was freed. SWT/KWS, July 2020.¹

The information came from zoo veterinarians. It was collected and verified by experts at the Leibniz Institute, and the report on the parturition of 19 female rhinoceroses was published in the journal Theriogenology. The authors summarized the gestation cycle and parturition without going into the ante-natal and post-natal complications that are specific to rhinoceroses in captivity, which would definitely have dampened the bright picture.

For 19 mothers under observation one little rhinoceros was born, after an average gestation period of 16 months and 3 weeks. The pre-natal labour is almost unnoticeable laypeople and for non-spe-The new-born cialized zookeepers. is delivered in less than 25 minutes. When the head (and large ears) of the rhinoceros appear first, delivery is over in less than 10 minutes. When the calf is positioned with the hind feet first, delivery can take up to 45 minutes. Delivery is undoubtedly very fast so as to avoid the curiosity of predators. The new-born weighs between 40 and 70 kg. He stands up after one hour, and after 3 to 5 hours, nurses for the first time. He remains completely dependent on his mother's milk for 6 months, more or less.

Robert Hermes and al. Parturition in white rhinoceros, Theriogenology (2020).²

July 28, 2020

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

A male black rhinoceros lost his life. The cause is unknown. The body was too far decomposed to carry out an autopsy. Death had occurred two weeks earlier. The only remains are the vertebra and the large bones, as well as the 2 horns, which were put in safekeeping. SWT/KWS, July 2020.³

August 14, 2020 Kibera, Nairobi Coutny, Kenya

Corporal Henry Makua Onsongo, alias Masai, was sentenced to 3 years in prison and a fine of 40,000 shillings (372 US\$) or



6 additional months in prison if he does not pay. He was arrested on March 10, 2015, in the company of Richard Ngeleka Kalatanda and Eliud Wanyonyi, in possession of a rhinoceros horn weighing 600 g and estimated at 1.2 million shillings (13,117 US\$ or 21,860 US\$/kg). The irony is that the corporal was a "nightmare" for criminals. See "On the trail" n° 8 p. 62. Nairobi News, August 8, 2020; The Star, August 9, 2020.⁴

September 26, 2020 Eastleigh, Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya



In their car, there were 2 horns weighing a total of 1.24 kg, assessed at 18,700 US\$, or 15,080 US\$/kg, and a big wad of phony bank notes. The man, Abdikadir Mohamed Yusuf, of unknown nationality, and the woman, Kowsar Salah Ugas, Kenyan, had been on police and KWS radar for 3 months.

The couple pleaded not guilty, despite all evidence and expectations. The chief inspector of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations recommended that the court not grant a release on bail for the 2 individuals. He is afraid that the 2 suspects might disappear forever. Their lawyer claims that there is no flight risk, stressing that Yusuf is married to a female Kenyan citizen with whom he has 10 children.

The Star, September 26, 2020; Nairobi News, September 29, 2020.⁵

ZIMBABWE

Early August 2020 Bubye Valley Conservancy, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

Rangers found 2 dead black rhinoceroses. One of them no longer had his horn. They had bullets in their lungs. The poachers are on the run. The Herald, August 3, 2020.⁶

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

KENYA - SOUTH AFRICA

Concerning anti-intrusion measures, reserves are turning themselves into military bases or Seveso industrial sites.

- NTT and Cisco plan to equip 6 reserves covering 250 km² with optical sensors, video surveillance cameras and a dedicated software program Earthranger. Realtime data transmission would enable a checking pool to collect information, sort it, share it among a network of 6 reserves, trigger alarms and deploy rangers to the field. Connected Conservation also explain that the system could prevent conflicts with local populations when wild animals, who cause fear because of their size and concern because of their eating habits, come close to herds of domestic animals, fields of crops and villages.

- For his part, the partnership between the NGO Wildlife Act and Ezemvolo, the wildlife management authority, plans to equip the HiP (Hluhluwe-iMfolozi park), 960 km², with a "smart" fence electrified, and equipped with optical sensors. "Two sections of fence have been upgraded to date and we have already seen a shift in rhino poaching activity away from both areas to sites where there is no detection fence."

Dispatch Live, September 21, 2020; Global Security Mag, July 2020.⁷

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 5, 2020 Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

A 7-month-old white rhinoceros was wandering down a tourist route south of the park. The orphan was chased by lions and elephants, and ran back to take refuge near his mother's body after she was killed and dehorned by poachers. He was transferred by helicopter to the Care for Wild refuge and placed in intensive care. He was named Nhlanhla, "the lucky one" in Shangaan, a local language.

It is apparent from reliable but incomplete statistics compiled by Save the Rhino International that at least 8,889 rhinos were poached in Africa between 2010 and 2020.

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, July 5 and 8, 2020; Getaway, July 13, 2020; ENV, June 29, 2020; Save the Rhino.⁸

July 13 and 14, 2020 OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

- On July 13, seizure of 47 kg of rhinoceros headed horns for Malaysia. The local value economic is estimated at 3 million rand (174,260 US\$, or 3,708 US\$/ka). Thev were in cardboard declared boxes as "scaffolding materials."



The sender was arrested at Edenvale.



- On July 14, a sniffer dog uncovered 6 suspicious packages declared as "works of art" destined for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, via Doha, Qatar. They contained a total of 41 horns and fragments of rhinoceros horns, estimated at 115.66 million rand (6,718,285 US\$). They were wrapped in carbon paper, aluminum foil and cloth.



SAPS, July 16, 2020; The Citizen, July 16, 2020; Eyewitness News, July 15, 2020.⁹

July 23, 2020 Beaufort West, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Pedro Baloi, 42 years old, was sentenced to 5 years in prison. He is one accomplice

of Alexandre Shinthangu, also sentenced to 5 years in prison on May 31, 2018. They entered Karoo national park in August 2017 and were about to attack some rhinoceroses. See "On the Trail" n°21 p. 76. SAPS, July 29, 2020.¹⁰

July 23, 2020

Weenen Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

At 4 p.m., shots were heard. A white rhinoceros was found dead and dehorned. According to Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, his horns had been removed preventatively last September. The poachers killed him for stumps. No arrest. Ladysmith, July 24, 2020.¹¹

FAMILY AFFAIRS End of July 2020

Middelburg, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

The father, Alberto Ernesto Nharreluga, and his son were transporting 2 rhinoceros horns and some shark fins in their car when they were arrested in April 2019 on N4 at a police roadblock. They were coming back from Mozambique and headed for Pretoria. They tried to bribe the cops. They were charged with trafficking endangered species and attempted corruption. Their lawyer was not able to get them released on bail. SAPS, July 28, 2020.¹²

January – Early August 2020 South Africa

Poaching mortality remains very high for the 2 endangered African rhino species.

316 individuals were killed between January and June 2019 compared to 166 in the same period in 2020, 150 in national parks and 16 in private ranches. Private reserves are smaller, easier to protect and owners are strenghtening the monitoring and deterrence arrangements with electric fencing, cameras, private militias and preventive dehornings. The decrease in poaching can also be explained by the "Stay at home order" and the unannounced roadblocks set up here and there to monitor its application on little used roads. It is difficult to go for a walk with axes, syringes, rifles or automatic weapons and return with bloody horns. All things considered, 166 rhinos in 6 months of war against Covid is a lot and suggests a strong resumption of smuggling as soon as maritime and air logistics comeback.

Africa Geographic, August 3, 2020; Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, July 31,2020; Daily Maverick, August 7, 2020; Le Temps, July 3, 2020.¹³

August 9, 2020

Maubane, Temba, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Eight men between 31 and 47 years old were arrested. In their homes, they had unlicensed firearms and ammunition. They are suspected of rhinoceros poaching. An accomplice attempted to bribe the police with 8000 rand (477 US\$) and was arrested.

Pretoria Rekord, August 11, 2020.¹⁴

August 14, 2020 Crocodile Bridge Section, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



A female orphan rhinoceros, between 8 and 10 months old, was wandering around alone. She was taken to the Care for Wild Rhino refuge. She seems to have been lost by her mother or his mother has been poached.

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, August 15 and 16, 2020; SANParks, August 14, 2020.¹⁵

August 24 and 25, 2020

Near Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Two rhinoceroses were shot to death. The first was dehorned. The second still had his horns. Farm workers had arrived and the poachers fled. Polokwane Review, August 26, 2020.¹⁶

August 31, 2020

Timbavati Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Poachers killed a male and a female rhinoceros. The female's orphan was taken to the Care for Wild Rhino refuge.

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, August 31, 2020.¹⁷

September 9, 2020 – April 6, 2021 Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



Sinovuyo Salela remains in custody. He had surrendered to the police in April 2020 to confess to his involvement in the 17 March murder of Lieutenant Colonel Leroy Bruwer, the Hawks investigator who over the course of his career has brought several rhino horn

traffickers, including Mister Big and Big Joe, to the bar of the Mpumalanga courts (see "On the Trail" no. 28 p. 4). Leroy Bruwer's latest investigations are being scrutinised and the Hawks are looking into the cases of Elliot Sindane, Elvis Mlimi and Mabuthi Khoza who are suspected along with two others of of illegal hunting, illegal possession of firearms, trespassing at the Kaapmuiden Dalton farm, Mpumalanga province, and trafficking in rhino horn in 2011 and 2012. Under dubious circumstances, they were dismissed and this cold case was unearthed a few weeks before his murder by Lieutenant Colonel Leroy Bruwer and his team. Lowvelder, 19 June, 13 July, 22 September 2020; SAPS 10 September 2020 and 8 April 2021.¹⁸

September 10, 2020 South Africa

John Hume is trading in horns and defying national and international law. An email sent by Elizabeth van Niekerk, in charge of marketing and the application of legal procedures at the Buffalo Dream Ranch encouraged purchasers and potential speculators to go ahead and take the step. "We offer three classes of horns to the public at an incredibly special price for each of the classes... For both local and foreign buyers, after choosing your horn(s) from the attached list of DNA certificates (...) you must email us your choice of horns, with a certified copy of your ID or passport, proof of address and if the purchaser is a company, the certified copies of the company registration documents (in English) no older than three months. This is similar to what you need in South Africa to buy a cellphone."

"A 30% deposit will be required to be paid into our CFC account (...) upon receipt of your documents... South African buyers will be able to collect horn(s) after payment of the remaining 70% in Gauteng and we will ensure that you are in possession of all the correct permits as required by law."

"For the export of horn and upon receipt of the remaining 70%, we offer to deliver the horns free of charge to the shipping agent at O.R. Tambo (...) If you want to act as a trader for the sale of larger quantities of horns, contact us for further information."

In response, the Ministry of the Environment, Forests and Fisheries denounced "misrepresentation of the facts" and pointed out that horn sales were exclusively limited to the South African domestic market. John Hume is trying to ram open that door that was left ajar by the exemption granted to expats with dual nationality to legally export a rhinoceros horn as personal belongings or souvenirs with no commercial intent.

According to the same ministerial release, a high level panel is in charge of making recommendations on the trade, breeding, hunting and management of rhinoceroses or their parts.

John Hume, see "On the Trail" n°29 p. 46.

South African Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, September 10, 2020; Saturday Star, September 12, 2020.¹⁹

September 14, 2020 Buffelskloof and Middelburg, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



The judicial consequences of a sordid traffic between a respectable farmer and

rhinoceros breeder, and a Chinese couple addicted to amphetamines was reported in "On the Trail" n°20 p. 85-86. The horn was attached to the Lexus chassis when it left the ranch. It was sniffed by the canine brigade. Deon Cornelius, ranch manager, was sentenced 3 years later to 2 minor fines totaling barely over 3,500 US\$, although at the time of the incident in January 2018, the white rhinoceros horn was estimated to be worth 175,000 rand, or 14,175 US\$.

SAPS, September 15, 2020; Lowvelder, September 15, 2020; Dispatch Live, September 15, 2020.²⁰

September 21, 2020 Randburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

In some ways, Yansen Feng and Liu Li Hong are the Bonnie and Clyde of wildlife trafficking. Arrested in January 2018 for transporting rhino horn (see opposite), they were immediately fined and, in the event of nonpayment, sentenced to prison. A search of Hong's house resulted in the seizure of raw ivory.

year later, Feng, Α who had remained on the Hawks' radar, was caught in possession of 5 horns or horn fragments, 14 abalones, 2 sea cucumbers and 3 seahorses and remanded in custody. In March 2019, he lured the investigating officer with a 'donation' of 100,000 rand (6,800 US\$) providing that he is granted bail and a further 50,000 rand providing that his case is struck out the judicial record. Chinese expatriates in southern Africa have an overconfidence in the ability of the African judiciary to be corrupted. The Hawks pretended to give in to Feng's



temptation. They set up a meeting with Feng's intermediary and an undercover policeman. It was Liu Li Hong who arrived with 100 000 rand in her pocket. She was remanded in custody for complicity in active bribery and is reportedly about to be deported from South Africa. Yansen Feng was sentenced to 10 years in prison for trafficking in rhino horn and attempting to suborn law enforcement officials.

See "On the Trail" n°20 p.85-86 and n° 28 p. 94. Save the Beast - Stop the Slaughter, September 21, 2020; SAPS September 23, 2020; Randburg Sun, October 7, 2020.²¹

September 29, 2020 Letaba Ranch, Limpopo Province,

South Africa



In 2012, Khosa, an employee for the African Field Ranger Training Service, led

a training course at the Letaba wildlife reserve. He was contacted by a certain Ngwenya, who lives in the province of Gauteng and who told him about plans to poach a rhinoceros on the ranch. Khosa's superiors advised him to cooperate and gave him the status of police informer. Khosa recommended that Ngwenya or his accomplices poach in Letaba in November 2012. He explained that it would be a good time because the rangers would supposedly be on strike. Ngwenya and his consorts did not take the bait, and Khosa, without going back to the story about a strike, advised the would-be poachers to try their luck on Saturday, January 12, 2013, when the moon was full. That night, the poachers used their vehicle to come near to the ranch and then flee. The ax, the firearm and the ammunition were on their own full responsibility. Khosa, the police informer, simply showed them how to get in. The poaching expedition was part success and part failure. Two rhinoceroses were wounded but managed to flee far enough away so they could not be tracked down and done in. The Letaba ranch stretches for 420 km² and the poachers high-tailed it. Khosa then recommended that they come back two days later, pretending to have located one wounded rhinoceros who was incapable of moving and therefore an ideal target.

Khosa also informed his superiors of the course of events and the Letaba rangers mounted an ambush to neutralize the poachers by any means, including fatal means if necessary. The sharpshooter poacher entered the ranch, Khosa followed him, and this time, he was carrying an ax in his bag. An accomplice stayed in the escape car at first and then vanished. The rangers' attention and all resources were focused on the ambush inside the ranch.

But things did not go exactly as planned or as desired. Mulalu Nemakhavhani, one of the rangers, was killed on the spot by a stray bullet during exchange of fire. Bilankulu and Mokoena, two of the poachers, were accused of murder and sentenced to 25 years in prison as a mandatory minimum sentence. They appealed against the decision on the main motive that the ranch management, the police and Khosa facilitated the acts that were committed and were therefore partly responsible. They also claimed that Khosa's testimony was false. In their opinion, the ruling should be annulled.

The Court confirmed the first instance ruling, considering that entrapment is a proactive investigative technique, that no weapons or other operational equipment had been supplied to the poachers, that Khosa did not pressure the accused into committing the crime of poaching, that all of the information provided, including some deliberately false information, was eagerly accepted and that in the end, Khosa had gone no further that providing an opportunity to commit the offence.

IOL, October 5, 2020; Bilankulu and Another v The State (Case no 188/2020) South Africa: Supreme Court of Appeal (ZASCA) 114, September 29, 2020.²²

August 17 and November 24, 2020 Grahamstown, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Demonstration in front of the court. Rhino owners, game reserve employees and veterinary doctor William Fowls gathered. Jabulani Ndlovu, Forget Ndlovu and Sibusiso Ndlovu, sentenced to 25 years in prison in April 2019, are



appealing. The Supreme Court found a procedural defect: the searches were conducted without a warrant issued by the prosecutor. According to William Fowls, " they were involved in far more cases than these that they have not been charged for. They were so prolific that we always assumed that there were four or five teams of poachers using darts to poach rhino. But since their arrest, I am not aware of a single darting incident in the Eastern Cape. "The Ndlovu trio used M99, better known as Etorphine or Thiafentanil, to kill.

The Ndlovu are full moon workers. At work for 10 years, they were nabbed in 2016 in an Airbnb through Operation Full Moon. "At first they could only kill and take the horn from one rhino, by the time we caught them they were doing 4 a night," adds the vet who performed the autopsies on most of the trio's victims. The Ndlovu had two faces in their lives. Werewolf poachers on full moon nights, Jabulani has 5 children and ran an export business to Zimbabwe, Forget was a chicken farmer, Sibusiso was a taxi driver and aluminium window installer.

On November 24, the Ndlovu appeal was dismissed. See "On the Trail" n°25 p. 76, n°21 p.77, n°19 p. 85, n°18 p. 70, n°17 p. 77.

Daily Maverick, August 21, 2020; SA People, November 24, 2020.23

NAMIBIA

Early July 2020 Namibia

A man involved in poaching operations and rhinoceros horn smuggling was arrested. The Namibian, July 9, 2020.24

July 16, 2020

Otjondeka, Kunene Region, Namibia

Murumbua Vetjesavi and Richard Kandjii were arrested in possession of 2 rhinoceros horns. Their vehicle was seized. The Namibian, August 4, 2020.²⁵

July 17, 2020

Omaruru, Erongo Region, Namibia

Sackeus Erastus was arrested. He is accused of having poached a rhinoceros in February 2020. The Namibian Sun, July 24, 2020.²⁶

January-August 2020 Namibia

Namibia has started preventively arresting poachers suspected of intending to poach rhinoceroses and steal their horns, equipping themselves for the purpose of perpetrating crimes and collecting information through reconnaissance. According to the Ministry of the Environment, Forests and Tourism, the approach pays. Poaching stats are going down: 61 in 2016, 55 in 2017, 78 in 2018, 46 in 2019 and 22 in the first 9 months of 2020. Pohamba Shifeta also wishes to recognize the canine brigades: "Since the introduction of sniffer dogs to combat poaching in Namibia, wildlife crimes have seen significant reduction."

Reuters, September 22, 2020; The Namibian, July 9, 2020.²⁷

August-September 2019 / March-August 2020 Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

In August 2019, 33 rhinoceros horns were stolen from the owner of a private reserve in Outjo. He had cut the horns off his rhinoceroses to protect them from poaching. They are worth an estimated 5 million N\$ (297,940 US\$).

Two horns were delivered to Ludwig Nangolo in Windhoek. With his accomplices, Paulus Pendapala Herman and Petrus Lipinge, he contacted Fortunato Jose Queta. For 2 years now, the Angolan teacher has been a middleman between Namibian traffickers and buyers in Angola. On August 11, 2019, Fortunato Queta put the 3 Namibians in contact with a Vietnamese known as David Somni. They met in Ondjiva, in Angola. Somni bought the 2 horns for 147,000 N\$ (8759 US\$). The 3 Namibians then obtained 6 other horns stolen in Outjo, and sold them to Somni in the same way, on August 14, for 670,000 N\$ (39,924 US\$). They were arrested in September 2019 and released on bail for 30,000 N\$ (1,990 US\$).

In the beginning of March 2020, Fortunato Queta was arrested in the Ohangwena region in Namibia. In May, the court refused to release him on bail. He appealed, but the High Court confirmed the refusal on August 3.

The 4 men have been accused of money laundering, and of possession, theft and attempted sale of 33 rhinoceros horns.

The Namibian, August 5, 2020.28

August 5, 2020

Outapi, Omusati Region, and Sesfontein, Kunene Region, Namibia

- Veiyo Weyulu Nelenge was arrested for smuggling rhinoceros horns.

- Uaungumana Piriko was arrested for an old case of rhinoceros poaching.

Republikein, August 11, 2020.29

August 21, 2020

Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Dave Ngumbi, Alfred Rukee, Lucas Hidinwa and Hengua Kaipi were arrested during the night. Seizure of a vehicle. They are accused of poaching 2 white rhinoceroses, a male and a female, between July 22 and August 15, in a private reserve. The male died of his bullet wounds and was dehorned. The female survived and managed to flee. The 2 rhinoceroses are worth one million Namibian dollars (59,600 US\$).

NBC, August 25, 2020.30

August 28, 2020

Otjomumbonde, Kunene Region, Namibia

Firearm poaching of 2 black rhinoceroses, a female and her young, in the Omatendeka reserve. Their horns were cut off. No arrests. The Namibian, September 1st, 2020.³¹

August 31, 2020

Okahao, Omusati Region, Namibia

Esra Kariripi, Jamunika Turitjo and Uatjitavi Turitjo were arrested. Seizure of one rhinoceros horn, a hunting rifle and 23 rounds of ammunition. The Namibian Sun, September 23, 2020.³²

September 4, 2020

Omungwelume, Ohangwena Region, Namibia

What were Mr. Jonas Indongo Valombola and Mr. Stein lipinge Shikomba up to near the Angolan border with a rhinoceros horn in their pockets? Republikein, September 9, 2020.³³

September 7, 2020

Omitara, Omaheke Region, Namibia

Elifas Mashuna, who was involved in a case of rhinoceros poaching in August 2019, has been arrested. The region is rich in poachers, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 84, n°16 p. 69, n°21 p. 78 and n°29 p. 79. The Namibian Sun, September 16, 2020.³⁴

September 10, 2020 Kamanjab, Kunene Region, Namibia

Three armed men who had been surreptitiously dropped off very close to Etosha park were arrested by the police, who were on the look-out after having received a phone call. The 3 troublemakers were also in possession of marijuana.

The Namibian Sun, September 16, 2020; Republikein, September 13, 2020.³⁵

September 23, 2020 Okahao, Omusati Region, Namibia

Tobias Amutenya broke several laws, the riotous Assemblies Act, the Ruling on the preservation of species, the Law on the control and trade of products sourced from wildlife and the Law on the prevention of crime by organized gangs. He is suspected of having premeditated the poaching of at least one rhinoceros.

The Namibian Sun, October 1st, 2020.³⁶

End of September 2020 Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Kaventji Ngandi, Kahama Ngumbi and Vintilinu Antonio Makopi, Angolans, were arrested. They are suspected of poaching a rhinoceros in August. Republikein, October 8, 2020.³⁷



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May-August 2020

Ireland, United States of America

On August 1st, 2019, John Slattery, ex-John Flynn, had been arrested in Ireland under an international warrant of arrest issued by the US judicial authorities.

On May 23, 2020, in the midst of a Covid-19 lockdown, he was transferred on a private jet chartered by the US government from Ireland to the United States under the extradition treaty between the 2 countries.

On July 22, he was sentenced by the federal court in Waco (Texas) to one year in prison for his involvement as part of an organised gang in a fraudulent purchase of rhino horns and smuggling to China in 2010.

On August 28, 2020, the 2-surname trafficker returned to his country on a scheduled American Air-lines flight from Dallas to Dublin after a 3-month stay in Fort Worth penitentiary. The United States agreed to his repatriation to Ireland on the grounds that the Rathkeale Rovers member had already spent 9 months in jail in Ireland pending the finalisation of the ex-



tradition procedure. See "On the Trail" n°8 p.66, n°9 p.69, n°10 p.49, n°12 p.72.

US Department of Justice, May 26 and July 22, 2020; The Irish Sun, May 25 and August 29, 2020. ^{37bis}

EASTERN ASIA)

CHINA

August 3, 2020 Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Chine

A 34-year-old woman was sentenced to 2 years in prison. On October 19, 2019, 16

kg of horn sections were found in her baggage. She was coming from Johannesburg and on her way to Viet Nam. See "On the Trail" n°27 p. 90.

Government of Hong Kong, August 3, 2020.38



SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

September 2020 Gunung Leuser National Park, Aceh and North Sumatra Provinces, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Gunung Leuser is as big as Sicily,

25.900 km². The Leuser protected wildlife area is threatened by traps. Nylon and iron are the worst enemies of the 50 to 60 Sumatran rhinoceroses who are caught like wild boars. The hairy little rhinoceros stands 1.5 m high, for the larges of them, and is armed with 2 horns, with the rear horn just a small bump with no point most of the time. "Elephants that are huge can be severely injured or even killed [by the traps], so imagine what will happen to the rhinos that are much smaller," says Rudi Putra, spokesperson for the FKL (Leuser Conservation Forum).

Mongabay, November 13, 2020.³⁹

July 13, 2020 Viet Nam

According to a study carried out by Danish and Vietnamese universities, the Vietnamese bourgeoisie who is constituting the main clientele for traffickers of rhinoceros horns and their derivatives is impervious to the multiple NGO campaigns embodied by various celebrities. "Consumers in general will agree to sign the pledge because of pressure from their peers or superiors or simply because it does not cost them anything.""We all know that nothing is a panacea, not only rhino horn. This guy [a Vietnamese celebrity featured in a campaign] does not need to teach us," said a business owner, one of the panelists interviewed. According to the authors, the proliferation of the campaigns is counterproductive. The organizations who lead them and their illustrious spokespersons are suspected of somehow looking more for personal profit and popularity than to reduce the demand for horns and their derivatives. The multitude of messages seems to perplex and bore the public. Hoai Nam Dang Vu, the principal author of the study believes that a single national campaign backed by several stakeholders would capture more attention, and the NGOs should ask themselves whether it is really useful and productive to stick their logos all over posters and other media.

British Ecological Society, July 14, 2020; Dang Vu, Hoai Nam & Nielsen, Martin & Jacobsen, Jette. (2020). Reference group influences and campaign exposure effects on rhino horn demand: Qualitative insights from Vietnam. People and Nature. 2. 10.1002/pan3.10121.⁴⁰



INDIA

July 7, 2020

Rongmongwe, Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Eptarul Ishlam, Abdul Khalek, Jersong Teron, Krishna Bhumij, Amor Teron, Bijoy Teron, Uttam Singner and Kanplong Terrang, aged between 20 and 28 years, were arrested. They are suspected of

wanting to poach in the Kaziranga national park. Four 12-caliber rifles and ammunition were found on them and seized. Every year, poachers try their luck while the park is flooded. At that time, the rhinoceroses take refuge in the hills.



Deccan Herald, July 7, 2020.41

REPEATED OFFENSE August 8, 2020 Kaziranga National Par

Kaziranga National Park, Golaghat and Nagaon Districts, and Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Second rhinoceros poached in 2020. Forest rangers heard 6 shots in the evening. The next day, they found a female surrounded by 6 empty 303-rifle cartridges. Her horn had been sawed off. A dog was able to track a suspect, a well-known poacher. He was arrested. In total, 5 or 6 people were allegedly involved. They set up an ambush after having crossed the Brahmapoutre River. A rhinoceros horn can sell for 1 crore Rs (133.530 US\$) on the black market in South-East Asia. At least 4 attempted instances of poaching have been thwarted since the beginning of the floods in June.

The Times of India, August 9, 2020; The Hindu, August 8, 2020; The New Indian Express, August 8, 2020.⁴²

REPEATED OFFENSE August 25, 2020

Rangsali Sonari, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

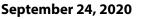
Babul Das and Ratul Das, alias Gunda, were arrested. Gunda has been involved in numerous cases of rhinoceros poaching. He had been on the run since 2019. He admitted to having buried a rifle near his house. The police went there and put his hand on a 303-rifle, a charger and a silencer. He apparently used them for his dirty work. The boat that was used to enter the park was also seized. Its owner, Krishnadev Saikia, 55 years old, is on the run.

The Sentinel Assam, August 26 and 27, 2020; Biswanath Police, August 25, 2020.⁴³

The Sentine

September 17, 2020 Dimapur, Dimapur District, State of Nagaland, India

15 million rupees (205,000 US\$) in the hands of Peter Lotha. The Sentinel Assam, September 17, 2020.⁴⁴



Bokakhat, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

Rajen Rongfer and Mridul Pegu were arrested by the municipal police of Tarjen Terang. They were involved in the sale of a horn in 2016. They were turned over to the Department of Forests, who indicted them. In 2016, 12 rhinos were poached in the Kaziranga national park, 22 in total in Assam. India Today, September 25, 2020; Guwahati Plus,

India Today, September 25, 2020; Guwahati Plus, September 25, 2020.⁴⁵

NEPAL

GANG September 25 and 28, 2020 Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Hobibur and Ashok are mahouts. They are patrolling on elephants' back inside Kaziranga park. After the Brahmapoutre floods, they said they had "recovered" a horn, without going into how they recovered it. They then sold it to Hariram and Biman, who have a good reputation. They are social and cultural activity leaders in the Karbi Anglong district and participate in teaching programs on the beauty and utility of wildlife in the Kaziranga park. The horn was then passed on to Terang, an entrepreneur in public works and also involved in the socio-cultural field, who in turn sold it to a former parliamentarian from Nagaland, the State next to Assam and on the border with Myanmar. 18 rhinoceroses drowned because of the flooding this year.

During the floods, the staff found the carcasses of drowned rhinoceroses. Sometimes the horns were gone, sometimes they were still intact, in which case, when the flooding subsided, they were cut off and regulations require them to be handed over to park management and put away for safekeeping. Horn trafficking during the monsoon apparently started 3 years ago, and it is possible that the mahouts and their accomplices could have more to add to their confessions and to their tally of poaching.

The Times of India, September 28 and October 1st, 2020.46

September 6, 2020 Laukhani, Nawalparasi District, Gandaki Province, Nepal



After a 41-month lull, it has started again: a rhinoceros was poached. Between 20 and 25 years old, with 2 bullet wounds in the head, he managed to run away and then collapsed in a river, surrounded



by plastic bottles and other trash. The poachers were not able to steal the horn and hooves. The death occurred 5-6 days ago. "In the aftermath of Covid-19, people working abroad and in urban areas have gone back to their villages, and illegal poaching for easy, extra money could motivate them to kill wildlife," said Prakash K Paudel, cofounder of the NGO Greenhood Nepal. Starting at the beginning of the March-April 2020 lockdown, a rise in poaching and illegal land clearing was observed in the forests.

The Kathmandu Post, September 11, 2020; Online Khabar, September 9, 2020.⁴⁷



Kaziranga National Park. Photo Mike Prince

TIGERS, LIONS, LEOPARDS, CHEETAHS, SNOW LEOPARDS, LEOPARD CATS, MARBLED CATS, JAGUARS, PUMAS, BOBCATS



Cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus), South Africa. Photo Bernard Dupont

On the Trail n°30 The value of felines or felines parts on the black market, according to media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Animal	Part	US\$	Country/region	Ref. (year)
Leopard —	Skin, claws and bones	13,200	lu dia	45 (2020)
	Skin	205	India	53 (2020)
Jaguar —	Teeth or claws in amulet	30	Suriname	75 (2020)
	Skin	500-5,000	Latin America	75 (2020)
	500 mg of glue	25	Suriname	
		500	Asia	
Leopard and lion	Leopard cub + lion cub alive	5,000	Malaysia	49 (2020)*

* See chapter "Multi-species"

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early August 2020 Houghton, Gauteng Province, South Africa



Two white tiger cubs are being held captive in a chic villa north of Johannesburg. After an unannounced inspection by the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), the owners accepted to set up a drinking trough that could not be knocked over and to equip the captives' pen with a few play things. The SPCA continues to ask that they be transferred to a refuge where their living conditions would match their natural needs as closely as possible. Otherwise, what will happen to these cubs when they grow into mature tigers, cumbersome and dangerous for the family that is keeping them?

SPCA, August 5, 2020; Jacaranda FM, August 6, 2020.¹

August 2020 Benoni, Gauteng Province, South Africa



A tiger in a cage. He has a view of metal drums and ICBs full of dangerous substances. His environment also includes artificial lights, and the smells and noises of the industrial jungle.

Benoni SPCA and Ban Animal Trading South Africa, August 31, 2020.²



MEXICO

September 9, 2020 Mexico City, Mexico

A lady was doing her shopping in a shopping center with a tiger cub on a leash. The search of the snob's residence was not conclusive. The object of delirium had been taken away and hidden from indiscreet curiosity after pictures of the shocking shopping trip were published on social media. Profepa, September 9, 2020.³

September 21, 2020 Naucalpan de Juárez, State of Mexico, Mexico

Another tiger cub (from Bengal, as usual) is being held prisoner in greater Mexico City. About 2 months old, he has no papers, appeared out of nowhere, from a clandestine parturition in an abandoned circus trailer or the backroom of a private zoo. He went



through the Mexican prosecutor's office before being handed over to a public zoo. Profepa, September 21, 2020.⁴



CHINA

Around September 15, 2020 Dalian, Liaoning Province, China



A tiger skin was seized at the airport in the baggage of a passenger coming from Japan at an unspecified date. Customs services transferred it to the forest administration. On.cc, September 15, 2020.⁵

INDIA

July 23 and 25, 2020

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



Seizure of 12 vibrissae (whiskers) in a bag belonging to 2 guys coming out of the reserve through the Padmapur gate on a motorcycle, on their way to Chandrapur to make a deal. The seizure explained the poaching of a tiger who was electrocuted one year earlier. Narendra Chaudhari and Manoj Shende, the 2 whisker deliverers, told the whole story. The body of the approximately 5-year-old tiger was buried with help from Kailash Bhaurao Dadmal, after having amputated the vibrissae and the claws. The loot was handed over to a certain Subhash Govardhan Penchalwar, a sort of manager for wildlife goods who ensures regular and speculative revenues to local rogues. Every link in the poaching and trafficking chain are now behind bars in preventive detention, except Bandu Shrirame, the farmer who illegally installed the electric fence and has absconded. All the tigers' bones and other remains were exhumed. The only thing missing is a wad of vibrissae that Penchalwar says he quickly burned when he found out that his deliverers had been nabbed.

The Times of India, July 25 and 26, 2020; The Hitavada, July 26, 2020.⁶

July 31, 2020

Mysore, Mysore District, State of Karnataka, India Akash Rao and Vishnu were arrested. Seizure of a skin 3.15 m long and of a transportation vehicle. The Times of India, August 1st, 2020.⁷

August 8-9 and September 30, 2020 Panna National Park, Chhatarpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

A ranger says that with his binoculars, he saw a fight on the banks of the Ken River between 2 males, P123 and P43, claws and teeth bared, both wanting to mate with the tigress T6. After a couple of hours, the roaring stopped and P123, 5 years old, disappeared. On Sunday, August 9, the body of the defeated tiger was sighted floating down the river 8 km downstream from the site of the combat. He had been decapitated, his 4 paws amputated and his genitals cut from the base of the tail to the abdomen. The head could have been eaten by crocodiles, according to a hypothesis suggested by the reserve manager, but P123's penis, testicles and paws could not have been cut off by a reptile or fish, even carnivorous. Once again, the explanation came from 3 sniffer dogs, one Belgian shepherd and 2 German shepherds, who followed the tracks of P123's mutilations. They froze in front of a shack belonging to a certain Achchelal in the village of Palkoha, on an island in the middle of the Ken River and home to a thousand people. On August 8, Achchelal spotted the corpse washed up on the banks where his buffalos were grazing. He tried to pull it up onto dry ground on his own, but finally enlisted 2 accomplices, Ghanshyam Kushwah and Natthu Raikwar, to help him. (...) (...) Fortified by a pint of bootleg alcohol, the trio managed to get the tiger out of the river during the night, and then set about cutting off the head, genitals and paws of the fallen tiger. At 4 a.m., they put the remains of the mutilated carcass back in the water. On August 9, Achchelal and Raikwar buried the head between their cultivated fields. One of the superstitions that are the bane of tigers' existence is that a head buried in a field dissuades domestic and wild animals from trampling it. In a way, the tiger's head acts as a scarecrow and makes fencing unnecessary. The STSF (State Tiger Strike Force) investigators added that Achchelal wanted to eat the tiger's private parts in order to become "stronger" and that vibrissae, paws and penises are being used as talismans more and more frequently, which is becoming a major factor in tiger poaching. The Times of India, August 11, September 12 and 16 and October 2, 2020.8

REPEATED OFFENSE August 11, 2020

Hardua, Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



The unfortunate tigress was strangled by the nylon cord of a deer or boar trap, and wandered around for 10 days unable to eat or drink anything, without being spotted by a Dudwa tiger reserve ranger patrol and without alerting a single villager or wood-gatherer with her yowling and her frenetic agitation. Just before she collapsed at the edge of the forest, someone cutting grass finally saw her. Twelve village inhabitants were interrogated by the police. Five are in custody. They are suspected of having set the trap.

The Times of India, August 12, 13 and 14, 2020.9

August 25-26 and September 3, 2020 Nagarhole National Park, Kodagu District, State of Karnataka, India

A tiger has been found. Freshly killed. The skin is still in good condition. The vermin have not yet set in. The claws and canines are missing. The body has been partly butchered. It was lying 700 m from the first villages and 700 m from the forest rangers' camp. The autopsy revealed several rifle bullets in the victim's flesh and organs. Rana, a German shepherd with an excellent sense of smell followed the poachers tracks. Between August 26, 24 hours after the macabre discovery, and September 3, Santhosh, Khandera Shashi (alias Shashikumar KS), KP Uttappa (alias Khandera Sharanu) and Vattangada Ranju (alias Biddhappa H B) were taken in for guestioning. In their homes, police seized 1.5 kilos of tiger meat, 2 canines, 13 claws, a double-barreled shotgun, cartridges, a knife and other utensils that were useful for the crime. They all live in Sulugodu and in Nittur, right down the road. Conservationists were surprised that the rangers had not heard the shots fired. They say that it must have taken at least an hour to cut out the claws and pull out the teeth. The Karnataka Minister of the Environment quickly congratulated the reserve staff for having acted guickly and for having arrested the poachers.

The Times of India, Sept. 8, 2020; The Hindu, August 25 and 26, and Sept. 1st, 2020; The New Indian Express, August 26 and 27, 2020.¹⁰

NEPAL

September 11, 2020

Kollegal, Chamarajanagara District, State of Karnataka, India

It smells like barbeque in the district. Covid refugees are going after deer, but when the forest service's motor patrol followed a furtive car that was clearly trying to lose them, they laid their hands on 2 passengers and some presumed tiger claws. The question is whether a deer trap became a tiger trap, and in that case, where have the other tiger parts aone?

The Times of India, September 11, 2020.¹¹

INDONESIA

August 22, 2020

Aek Bilah District, South Tapanuli Regency and Barumun Nagari Wildlife Sanctuary, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A tigress in poor health was evacuated. About 3 years old, she weighed 45.2 kg. She should weigh around 60 kg. She is accused of having eaten a goat. Tigers here, like elsewhere, are faced with a shortage of food. Deer and other usual prey are caught in traps for their meat by traffickers' and certain members of rural communities. Tigers and other wild animals are driven from their territories by deforestation and intensive tree-farming.

The Jakarta Post, September 1st, 2020.¹²

August 27, 2020 Siak Regency Forest, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Another fatal case of poaching in the Siak

forest. A tigress, 8 to 10 years old, was strangled by the barbed wire of a trap. Farm workers found her on an oil palm plantation.

The provincial BKSDA initially chose to keep quiet about the affair. "Such publicity would threaten other Sumatran tigers and disturb the agency's efforts to save them. Frankly, the results of our monitoring show that hunting has worsened." After photos of the corpse were published on social BKSDA provided networks, the additional information. "Field analysis suggested that the tiger was ensnared in a different location from where it was found and that it had died about 10 days ago." The Jakarta Post, September 3, 2020; The New Straits Times, September 5, 2020.13

September 24, 2020 Bardiya National Park, Province no.5, Nepal

Since the beginning of the "Stay at home order," the army was supposed to be



extra vigilant and do rounds in the park (1000 km²) to catch poachers. The discovery of a rotting tiger carcass that had been caught in a trap for several weeks just 5 km from a military camp once again raises serious doubts about the efficiency and the frequency of the rounds. The victim was approximately 5 years old.

The Kathmandu Post, September 26, 2020.14

VIET NAM

July 20, 2020 Nghe An Province, Viet Nam



The police, in cooperation with ENV, seized 2 frozen tiger cubs. The seller, who had posted a tempting offer on Facebook, was arrested. ENV, July 23, 2020.15

End of July 2020

Bac Ninh Province, Viet Nam

Sentenced to 15 months in prison for having possessed and attempted to sell



EUROPE

RUSSIA

End of July 2020 Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

Seizure of the skin of a female Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*), also called Amur tiger, and ammunition from the boot of a car travelling to Khabarovsk from the Vyazemsky district 120 km away.

It is estimated that 600 Amur tigers live in the Primorsky krai, the Amur and Khabarovsk regions and in the Jewish autonomous region. The huntertrafficker faces up to 4 years in prison.

Siberian tiger, see "On the trail" n°2 p.39, n°3 p.39, 40 and 42, n°4 p.53, n°5 p.61 and 66, n°6 p.51, n°7 p. 56 and 116, n°16 p.106, n°19 p. 130, n°20 p.72 and 129, n°23 p.87 and n°27 p.83.

The Siberian Times, July 30, 2020.¹⁷

September 2020

Far Eastern Federal District, Russia

The story goes back to February 2018. The Amur tigress and her 2 cubs sometimes ventured near the village of Aleksey-Nikolskoye and domestic dogs had been victims of the felines' appetite. The conflict was getting nasty and the forest rangers decided to catch the unwelcome creatures and take them to a more isolated forest. Social distancing was required. It turned out that the mother was in poor health. She was entrusted to the Krasnoyarsk refuge for Amur tigers. In May 2019, after having taken lessons in living in the wild, the 2 two-yearold tiger cubs were freed.

Since then, their movements demonstrate good autonomy and a normal aptitude to hunt for food. The one named Pavlik is a traveler. Oblivious of administrative borders, he went back and forth to China, swimming across the river.

But the happy story ends badly. Starting on September 8, 2020, the GPS signaled absence of movement. A patrol found Palvik's body, with paws and head cut off, on September 23. The governor of Primorsky Krai declared, "I will seek the most severe punishment for those responsible. They won't get away with it!"

The Siberian Times, September 26, 2020.¹⁸

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

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

September 29, 2020 Karoo National Park, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Freedom has a price. For the 7 lions, it was death. They escaped from the park through a hole in the fence. They were accused of killing 10 sheep. They were shot from a helicopter.

News 24, September 30, 2020.19

KENYA

End of July 2020 Kenya

After having fought smuggling, the KWS is now going into contraception. "Everything is done with great care." The pilot phase consists of sterilizing 5 lionesses with implants that will work for one year. There are fewer than 2000 wild lions in Kenya. They are accused of eating 4 black rhinoceroses per year. There are fewer than 1000 black rhinoceroses in Kenya. The KWS family planning specialists see the sterilization of the lionesses as a way of saving Kenya's black rhinoceros population. NGOs are protesting against that kind of intrusion into the lions' private lives. Maybe someday they should sterilize the poachers? Afrik21, July 23, 2020.²⁰

August 7, 2020

Solio Game Reserve, Nyeri County, Kenya

A lioness suspected of attacking livestock has been captured. She is pregnant. She was transported in a cage. When she arrived near Mugunga, on the banks of the Murika River, she had bruises on her shoulders and muzzle. A ranger climbed onto the cage to open the door. The others were in the safety of their vehicles. She went straight toward the river. The prognosis will not be sure until the rangers know whether she is accepted by the other lions in the territory. SWT/KWS, August 2020.²¹

August 24, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

"Scarface," one of the last members of marsh band, received another visit from the vets. Years ago, a spear in the chest nearly cost him his life. Today, he has a wound near the right eye. He got it into a fight with another lion. "Scarface" was bitten. Clear water, iodine solution, antibiotics and a deworming treatment. "Scarface" is off again. The prognosis is positive, but he is getting old. His hind left paw is stiff following some unknown fight or ambush. SWT/KWS, August 2020.²²

July 26 - August 2, 2020 Mozambique

Two lions rescued. Their paws were caught in gin traps. The adult lion and

the 7- or 8-month-old female cub each had to have a paw amputated. The rangers, who had tracked the 2 victims before Joao, the vet, came to treat them, said that the members of the pride had brought meat to the 2 injured animals and licked their wounds. The team then left by helicopter to look for a 3rd lion who was dragging



around a metal trap attached to his paw. The vets of Saving the Survivors have faith in the amputated lions' ability to resist and adapt.

Given the circumstances due to Covid-19, many expat workers have come back to Mozambique. The rural populations have swollen. Brush meat trafficking has peaked. The blacksmiths are busy making traps. At the same time and also because of the pandemic, Asian demand for lion bones, reputed to cure everything, is also increasing. Saving the Survivors, July 26, 27 and 29, August 1st

and 2, 2020.²³ (25, 27) and 29, August

September 13, 2020 Mozambique



Exfiltration of a pride (3 females, one male and a cub) who had escaped from a reserve and were spreading panic in the neighboring villages. Five cows were allegedly the victims of the pride's wanderings. Legitimate defense was being organized. The hunting dogs were on alert and the firearms were loaded. After being anesthetized by hypodermic syringes shot from a helicopter, the 4 adult lions and the cub were transferred to the heart of the reserve that they had come out of, and out of which they may wander again if they do not find enough wild prey. Life is hard for the last of the lions. The male of the pride was anesthetized last year by the vets of Saving the Survivors who treated him for a nasty wound caused by a trap laid inside the reserve.

Saving the Survivors, September 13 and 15, 2020.24

NAMIBIA

July 28, 2020

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

Kudumu Nyambe Namukuka was arrested. In this town very close to Zambia, as well as to Botswana, Angola and Zimbabwe, he was in possession of a lion's skin.

The Namibian, August 4, 2020; The Namibian Sun, August 4, 2020.²⁵

September 29, 2020 Onaanda, Omusati Region, Namibia

Agustu Nankwaya, who came from the neighboring Angola to poach a lion, was arrested. Seizure of a firearm.

Republikein, October 8, 2020.26

UGANDA AND DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

July 2020

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



Queen Elizabeth National Park, Western Region, Uganda

Murchison Falls National Park, Western Region, Uganda

The Virunga park in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Queen Elizabeth park in Uganda are adjacent. In an ideal world, they would be complementary spaces open to farmers-gatherers and wild animals, where carnivores would regulate the herbivore populations. But that is not the case and a lion who got caught in a gin trap in Virunga went and collapsed in Queen Elizabeth. The veterinarians of the Uganda Conservation Foundation had no other choice but to amputate the paw.

From Mozambique to central Africa, gin traps strike. Emergency treatment veterinarians say that adult lions can get by with 3 paws. It was the same destiny for a lion caught in a gin trap in the Murchison Falls park.

Lions are also victims of the Covid-19 pandemic. Their organs are sought-after to make miracle cures, their meat is sought-after by those in need and by bush meat traffickers. Six lionesses in the 3 national parks have disappeared.

Uganda Conservation Foundation, July 29, 2020.27

ZIMBABWE

Early July 2020 Zimbabwe Her name was not Cecil and her death did



and American press. The passing of Lady Luuyando, from the word love in the Tonga dialect, simply left a deep and longstanding sadness at the Bumi Hills Foundation. She was courageous. After her pride was destroyed by sports hunting, in combination with human-wildlife conflicts, she devotedly took care of 4 lion cubs. No one knows

exactly how old she was. She had a cataract on the right eye, but that didn't keep her from having a watchful eye. Like many of her peers, she died alone, in a trap.

Bumi Hills Foundation, July 6, 2020.28

August 2020 Gonarezhou National Park, Masvingo **Province, Zimbabwe**



-The rangers happened upon 3 lion They suspect cyanide carcasses.

poisoning. Poachers from Mozambigue use cyanide more and more. It is inexpensive and effective.

- The rangers stumbled onto a temporary bivouac made up of odds and ends, arrested 5 suspects and seized lions' heads and teeth. The director of the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust, Evious Mpofu, confirmed that the lions had been poisoned by donkey meat soaked in cyanide. The suspects also had other tricks up their sleeves. At their camp, they also had Temik. One of the suspects spat out a piece of the puzzle: the byproducts from the dead lions pass into Mozambique by the Chiqualaquala border post.

The Herald, August 25, 2020.29

AMERICA

MEXICO

July 22, 2020

Ciénega de Flores, State of Nuevo León, Mexico

The lioness was closed up in a courtyard and was turning in circles, rubbing the walls until she bled. Her endless carousel ride was reported to the prosecutor. After an intervention by the Profepa (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente), she was admitted to the Nuevo León veterinary university, before being transferred to the Ouerétaro zoo.

Profepa, July 24, 2020.30

July 23, 2020

Ecatepec de Morelos, State of Mexico, Mexico

Another lioness of unknown age and origin was evacuated from a house where she was being wrongly and imprudently held captive. She was transferred to a UMA (Unidad de Manejo para la Conservación de Vida silvestre). Profepa, July 24, 2020.31

EUROPE

BULGARIA

September 2020

Blagoevgrad, Blagoevgrad Oblast, Sofia, Sofia City Oblast and Varna, Varna Oblast, Bulgaria

Bulgarian zoos date back to the Soviet era and no longer benefit from the sufficient maintenance and budgets to provide the animals with the minimum essentials of life. Incest in these places is considered an acceptable mode of reproduction. Cubs are produced by mating brothers and sisters. Two of them, about 3 months old, were vegetating in the Blagoevgrad zoo. They were living reclusively in a crate, their mother being unable to suckle and protect them. They were rushed to a veterinary clinic in Sofia and then entrusted to the Varna Zoo, which according to the NGO Four Paws also treats animals with hammers and sickles. The Haskovo and Razgrad zoos have also brought to birth cubs who are not strong enough to become lions.

There are reportedly 24 lions and 15 tigers in the zoos managed by the Bulgarian cities and State. The director of the Varna zoo says that the 2 cubs taken in as an emergency measure are doing well and are gaining a kilo a week. She wants to return them to her colleagues in Blagoevgrad provided that a new enclosure for big cats is built there.

The Independent, September 29, 2020; Four Paws, September 29, 2020; Bulgarian National Radio, October 7, 2020.32

RUSSIA

Early July 2020

Sochi, Krasnodar Krai, Southern Federal District and Chelyabinsk, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Russia

- A lion cub who was being exploited in the seaside resort by a beach photographer had 2 paws broken to prevent him from running away between 2 paying poses with suckers.

- When he was taken in by the NGO Save Me, he walked like a puppet on crutches. Operated by Karen Dallakyan, he gained some mobility and confidence. Before, he was afraid of everything and protected his eyes as if he was afraid of being slapped and hit. Now he stands up in the face of the water jets that spray him as if he likes the shampoos that make him beautiful. "Simba" later received 30 offers of accomodation and is expected to leave Chelyabinsk in the Urals, where he is being pampered, to be housed in Tanzania. The matter is being handled at the highest level. The Tanzanian embassy in Moscow is on the case.

Euronews, July 6, 2020; Daily Mail, August 8, 2020.33



AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 23, 2020 Near Stormsriver, Eastern Province, South Africa



Paws crushed by the metal wires. A slow death in a wretched trap.

Landmark Leopard & Predator Project - South Africa, July 24, 2020.³⁴



GABON

July 2020 Gabon

Mayombo Ndouma Georges was sentenced to 6 months in prison and a fine equivalent to 344 US\$ for poaching a leopard.

Conservation Justice, July 2020.35

August 11, 2020 - January 15, 2021 Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Three traffickers, including one female citizen from Benin, were arrested after being caught red-handed trying to sell

3 leopard skins at a market. Sentencing to sen in prison, a fine of 500,000 CFA francs (936 US\$) and 2 million CFA francs (3,745 US\$) in damages. EAGLE, August 17, 2020; Conservation Justice, March 2021.³⁶

KENYA

July 28, 2020 Chyulu Hills National Park, Makueni County, Kenya

Livestock owners are complaining of wild animals attacking their herds. There was an urgent need to calm the anger and reduce risks of retaliation. A leopard was lured into a cage with bait, then anesthetized before being transferred and released in the Tsavo East national park. Before the anesthesia took effect (10 or 15 minutes), he lost a few claws trying desperately to get out of the cage. SWT/KWS, July 2020.³⁷

NAMIBIA

August 1st, 2020 Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia Seizure of 3 skins in the Chinese quarter of the capital. The Namibian, August 4, 2020.³⁸

REPUBLIQUE DU CONGO

August 31, 2020 Dolisie, Department of Niari, Republic of Congo



Three arrests by law enforcement and the regional Department of Forest Economy, with support from the PALF (*Projet d'Appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage*) for possession, transportation and attempted sale of a leopard skin, skull and claws. The leopard was apparently poached in Banda, 150 km from Dolisie.

EAGLE, September 1st, 2020; Vox Congo, September 2, 2020.³⁹

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

September 19, 2020 Bofuli, Tshuapa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo



The trap-layer lived in Ikela. He caught a leopard on a river bank and did it in. Moro

Boloma Yoka was brought before the Boende High Court. Conserv Congo is pressing charges. Environews, September 24, 2020; Conserv Congo, September 24, 2020.⁴⁰





UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

August 31, 2020 - February 28, 2021 Davie, State of Florida, United States of America



A man named Poggi sold the right to spend time in a cage with a black

panther, with the possibility of establishing a friendly, affectionate relationship, for 150 US\$. The speed dating system was perfectly timed, but suddenly stopped short. Dwight Turner, one of Poggi's clients, wanted to pet the creature's tummy and play with her.

The "full contact experience" went further than planned. Turner was bitten on the head and ear. Since then, he has been going from operating room to operating room, to repair his face. Poggi is versatile in the exploitation of wild animals. He rents them out for birthdays and other parties, and he sells captive-bred marmosets on credit for between 3,000 and 6,000 US\$.

He was sentenced to one year probation period in February 2021 and ordered to pay a fine to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The NGOs are also requesting the revocation of his federal Animal Welfare Act license.

Two draft laws, the Captive Primate Safety Act and the Big Cat Public Safety Act, are meant to ban any abuse that tamers, breeders and renters of monkeys and felines could be guilty of.

CNN, October 31, 2020; The Humane Society of the United States, November 3, 2020; PETA, March 10, 2021; Miami New Times, March 12, 2021.⁴¹



INDIA

It is the debacle for the leopards. In 20 years, 5,000 have been poached. The pace is quickening as close contacts increase between the ever more numerous and invasive humans and the leopards on the defensive. Whoever wants the leopard's skin is dreaming of selling it for 10,000 US\$! Under the skin, there are the bones that sell for a good price in China. Since December 2019, 303 leopards have died in the Republic of India according to statistics recorded by WPSI (Wildlife Protection Society of India). 93 died from poaching. 210 died for other reasons such as road and rail collisions, defensive electrocution by farmers and lynching. The share of the so-called natural deaths is not quantified in this bleak picture. At least 16 states are hit by the slaughter. The most affected are Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. Mid Day, August 17, 2020.42

July 4, 2020 Dindori District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and

the Department of Forests captured 3 poachers in possession of a leopard skin and bones. The investigators had received a tip and trapped the poachers with a phony buyer. The poachers say they electrocuted the feline.

WCCB, July 5, 2020; The Hitavada, July 6, 2020.43

FAMILY AFFAIRS July 10, 2020 Nagarhole National Park, Mysore District, State of Karnataka, India



A 2/3-year-old female leopard was

reported dead on agricultural land rented by the state to local farmers. She was poisoned. Investigators found the toxic left-overs of a dog that had been used as bait. They were burried in a hole. A neighboring house, empty of occupants, was searched and revealed a small chemical arsenal. A few hours later, Machegowda, 65 years old, was arrested in the village. His son Krishna ran into the woods at to speed.

The New Indian Express, July 11, 2020.44

July 10, 2020

Seoni District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of the skin, claws and bones of a leopard. The whole batch was for sale for 1 crore, or 13,200 US\$. Shambhulal Pendre, Ramkumar Kakodiya, Naresh Kakodiya and Nandulal Uike were arrested. They say they poached the leopard in the Dhuma forest 2 months ago.

The New Indian Express, July 11, 2020.45

July 11, 2020

Indogaon, Gariaband District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

The deal that was to take place at the border between Chhattisgarh and Odisha fell through. A man was arrested.

Ommcom News, July 11, 2020.46

July 16 and 17, 2020 Vihirgaon, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India



The leopard was in very bad shape. He had taken refuge in an underground pipe

and had a wire slipknot around his neck. He had managed to free himself from a noose. The forest rangers and the veterinarian managed to get him out of the pipe without anesthetizing him. He was taken immediately to the Transit Treatment Center in Chandrapur. He died the next day. The Times of India, July 18, 2020.⁴⁷

August 5, 2020

Badarampia, Sundargarh District, State of Odisha, India

A carcass was found with its 4 paws amputated. The animal was supposedly responsible for attacking 5 people the day before and may have been the victim of a reprisal, according to the rumor spread by the local DFP (District Forest Officer). Perhaps motivated by vengeance, the killers were also motivated by profit. Paws, bones and claws sell for large sums of money. Biswajit Mohanty, wildlife conservationist expressed his anger: "Odisha has been losing both tigers and leopards due to poaching despite the state having excellent habitat and vast forests for the big cats to flourish. The forest department has miserably failed to control poaching even in tiger reserves like Simlipal and Satkosia."

Hindustan Times, August 6, 2020.48

August 9, 2020 Panchavalli, Mysore District, State of Karnataka, India



An approximately 5-year-old leopard died, strangled by a diabolical network

of wires in a ravine near the road between Hunsur and Virajpet, near the Nagarahole tiger reserve. The forest rangers unconvincingly recited the appropriate talking points, "It may have been caught in snare laid to trap wild boars which raid the farms and destroy crops."

The Times of India, August 10, 2020.49

September 3, 2020

Khejurikatas, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a leopard skin (153 cm long, 31 cm wide) destined for interior decorating, either in a bedroom or in a bathroom. Lakhman Nayak was arrested. The leopard had been poached 3 months earlier. Pragativadi, September 3, 2020; Press Trust of India,

Pragativadi, September 3, 2020; Press Trust of India, September 3, 2020.50

September 11, 2020 Nandahandi, Nabarangpur District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure, one after another, of 3 leopard skins in the satchels of 2 motorcycles. Four arrests.

The New Indian Express, September 14, 2020.51

September 12, 2020

Ramshehar, Solan District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India

For unknown reasons, the female leopard was killed by a bullet in her neck. The ballistic specialists say that the weapon was an old pistol. People said they hadn't heard or seen anything, even though the incident took place at the village gates. The Tribune, September 14, 2020.⁵²

September 14, 2020

Balipada, Ganjam District, State of Odisha, India A man was arrested in possession of a leopard skin. He claims to have wanted to sell it for 15,000 rupees (205 US\$) to a certain Krushna Patra. Between April and September 2020, between 10 and 12 leopard skins were seized by the state authorities. News Live Odisha, September 15, 2020.⁵³

September 17, 2020 Munnar, Idukki District, State of Kerala, India



Kumar, 34 years old, held a grudge. After brooding for a year, he managed to trap the leopard and do it in with a dagger. Kumar accused the leopard of having killed the cow that was his only source of revenue, over a year ago.

Onmanorama, September 18, 2020; The Times of India, September 18, 2020.⁵⁴

September 24, 2020

Patna Tamoli, Panna District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



A leopard was found mortally wounded in a snare. Thanks to the canine brigade,

the culprit was identified. He was a neighboring farmer. According to what he claims, he wanted to protect his fields from incursions of wild boars. The Times of India, September 26, 2020.⁵⁵

IRAN

July 26, 2020 Shahrud, Semnan Province, Iran



After a high-speed chase, the car was stopped and searched. Inside, as the inspectors had suspected, there was a leopard skin, complete with head and tail, freshly poached, skinned and prepared by a taxidermist. One arrest. IEW, July 30, 2020.⁵⁶

PAKISTAN

July 21, 2020

Sheikhan Village, Kohat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Seizure of 2 leopard cubs being held by a certain Gul Aman who intended to hand his 2 hostages over to the forest rangers in exchange for a ransom to be negotiated. Dawn, July 23, 2020.⁵⁷

End of July 2020 Kurram District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

A pack of hunting dogs tracking warthogs said to be ennemies of the crops were supposedly attacked by a leopard. The hunters did not hesitate to turn themselves into poachers. They slayed the cat and posted the proof of their cruelty on social media. The police are looking for 6 people.



The Express Tribune, July 23, 2020.58

Early August 2020

Islamabad, Federal Territory of Islamabad, Pakistan

The wildlife department is getting ready to auction off clothing and decorative objects made of leopard skins and other wild animals and seized in the lobby of a luxury hotel in February 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°24 p. 60). The expertise and price estimates were done by the Museum of Natural History. The idea is to use this opportunity to raise money to help protect wildlife in the vast metropolitan area. All of the animals were apparently poached in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The project is controversial. The leopard skin jackets cannot be purchased by foreigners unless they are exported through the black market. Benefiting from confiscated dead animals to protect live animals is giving an alibi to poaching.

Dawn, August 1st, 2020.⁵⁹

August 2020

Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Two individuals were arrested for poaching a mother leopard, selling her as a carpet and trying to sell the 2 orphan cubs on the black market.⁶⁰

August 23, 2020 Ambagastenna, Central Province, Sri Lanka



A leopard was killed in a snare set on private property. When they arrived at the scene,

the agents from the Department of Wildlife Conservation could do no more than record the death. News 1st, August 23, 2020.⁶¹

September 21, 25 and End of September 2020

Nallathanniya, Udadumbara and Teldeniya, Central Province, Sri Lanka



All hell is also breaking loose for the

leopards of Sri Lanka. They are less than 1,000 on an island of 65,610 km² and 22 million inhabitants. - A female leopard is found in the early morning hours in a tea plantation. Her head is riddled with bullets.

- There are rumours about the many powers of leopard meat. It boosts the libido, it cures asthma. A trio of 2 men and a woman trapped a leopard in a pathway, cut off the head, pulled out the teeth, flayed the skin to sell it for export and butchered the meat, 17 kg, to sell it on the island to the Chinese community or to wealthy natives who might see the consumption of the feline's meat as a way to prevent Covid-19. The pillaging of the leopard's body makes it impossible to determine his gender and age.

The Sunday Times, September 22 and 26, 2020; Geo from AFP, September 25, 2020; Sunday Observer, September 27, 2020; The Morning, October 4, 2020.⁶²

CHEETAHS - Acinonyx jubatus, Appendix I

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

August 17, 2020 De Wildt, Madibeng, North West Province, South Africa

The Ann Van Dyk Cheetah Centre was playing contrition after having sold 6 cheetahs in 1999 and 7 African wild dogs in 2018 to Chinese zoos, without having sufficiently verified the housing conditions. "In light of these experiences the Centre will not export animals to China again."

The center is now being hauled over the coals by Ban Animal Trading South and the foundation EMS (Elizabeth Margaret Steyn). A message, quickly erased, was posted on the Facebook page of the Mysore Zoo in India, announcing the "acquisition" of 3 cheetahs, one male and 2 females, from the Ann Van Dyk Cheetah Center. The 3 cats who in the wild are bolting miles (see "On the Trail n°15 p. 68 and n°21 p. 61) are stuck in a pen with a sand floor and 6 bushes. Mysore zoo is delighted: "This fastest terrestrial mammal will be displayed to the public after the quarantine period is over ".

Ban Animal Trading South Africa, August 18, 2020; Elizabeth Margaret Steyn Foundation, August 18, 2020.⁶³

KENYA

July 25, 2020 Baraka, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

An unlucky sub-adult cheetah stuck in a cul-de-sac inside a panic-stricken housing development – a lady supposedly died of fright – was shot down by the KWS in the suburbs of Voi. Fires of unknown origin have been starting in the Tsavo East and Tsavo West Parcs, recently, and pushing wild animals into the villages (cf. page 8).

Kenya News Agency, July 25, 2020.64

SOMALIA

July and August 2020

Haridad and Borama, Awdal Region, Selel Region and Erigavo, Sanaag Region, Somaliland Autonomous Region, Somalia

- 5 cheetah cubs were in the hands of nomads. They were recovered by a mission from the MoERD (Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Rural Development) and the CCF (Cheetah Conservation Fund), with help from the police, and transported to the Hargeisa veterinary refuge.

- 2 cheetah cubs had been in traffickers' paws for a month. The MoERD and the CCF intervened. The cubs are full of energy.



- The police have taken in a cheetah cub for safekeeping. He was confiscated from a nomad and fed by people in the village. A team from the MoERD and the CCF arrived 4 days later. Their vehicles had gotten stuck in flooding after a storm.

- 2 cheetah cubs held on a farm have been recovered by the MoERD and the CCF.

They are between 2 and 6 months old. Their mothers disappeared without leaving a trace. In most similar cases, the mothers are killed in retaliation for attacks on goats, or under that pretext, and the poachers attempt to sell their skins on the international smuggling market. The cheetah cubs are "adopted" to be trafficked on the pet market traffic for Gulf countries.

Africa Geographic, July 30, 2020; Abdinasir A. Hersi, July 20 and 29, and August 22, 2020.⁶⁵

September 23, 2020

Hargeisa, Maroodi Jeex Region, Somaliland Autonomous Region, Somalia

- Four men trying to negotiate the sale of 3 cheetah cubs were arrested, followed by the head trafficker and his assistant.

- 4 men transporting wicker baskets holding 10 cheetah cubs with the paws tied were intercepted. The 2 leaders of the band are behind bars. One of them has already spent several years in prison for illicit fauna trafficking.

The 13 cheetah cubs were taken to the CCF veterinary refuge. They are all thin, thirsty and covered with parasites. Two of them have wounds on their tails, 2 have injuries on their muzzles and another has an abscess on a hind paw.

Cheetah Conservation Fund, October 19, 2020.66

SNOW LEOPARDS - *Panthera uncia*, Appendix I

ASIA

PAKISTAN

August 5, 2020 Hopar Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan Territory, Pakistan



Muhammad Saleem and Muhammad Hanif were sentenced to 2 years in

prison and a fine of 100,000 rupees (601 US\$), and an additional 6 months in prison if the fine is not paid, for having poached a snow leopard. Two accomplices were sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of 100,000 rupees, and a third to one month in prison.

The High Asia Herald, August 3, 2020.67



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

(ASIA)

INDONESIA

August 8, 2020 Binjai, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



A male leopard cat was held in captivity. He was freed by the BKSDA and the Scorpion Foundation and released after a medical check-up in the Sibolangit reserve, about 50 kilometers away. Scorpion, August 8, 2020.⁶⁸

August 24, 2020 North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Voluntary handing over to the Scorpion Foundation of 2 leopard cats. They were examined to determine their capacity for release in the jungle. Scorpion, August 25, 2020.⁶⁹

VIET NAM

Early September 2020 Soc Son District, Hanoi, Viet Nam

The leopard cat had been held in a private residence for several months. He had become aggressive and unmanageable. His owner called for help from the ENV and the cat was transferred to the Hanoi wildlife reserve.

ENV, September 7, 2020.70

Mid-September 2020 Ca Mau Province, Viet Nam

Another leopard cat seized in a private residence. He was taken in by the Ca Mau forest services. ENV, September 19, 2020.⁷¹ MARBLED CATS - Pardofelis marmorata, Appendix I

ASIA

VIET NAM

August 11, 2020 Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

A female marbled cat was rescued from a restaurant by the staff of the Pu Mat national park and Save Vietnam's Wildlife. She is injured on her face and one paw. She is in intensive care at the Pu Mat refuge clinic.

The marbled cat is a species of wild cat who lives in trees, mainly in tropical forests. Its fur can be confused with the clouded leopard, but the marbled cat can be differentiated by its little size. The species is threatened by the destruction of its habitat and the skin trade.

Save Vietnam's Wildlife, August 13, 2020.72



Marbled cat (Pardofelis marmorata)

JAGUARS - Panthera onca, Appendix I

AMERICA

FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

September 26, 2020 Saint Georges, Department of French Guiana, France

The man was hiding in a small plastic bag 3 teeth and a claw from a jaguar. He had to pay a fine.

French Biodiversity Office, December 2020.73

GUATEMALA

GUAILINIALA

Mid-August 2020 Department of Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

Olivia Xol Tut has been taken in for questioning. In her home, authorities seized a jaguar skin, plus a white-tailed deer trophy (*Odocoileus virginianus, Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala).

Soy502, August 13, 2020.74

SURINAME

From yellow gold to yellow and black gold September, 2020 Suriname

The female jaguar had been monitored for a decade. The naturalists' trap cameras have seen her growing from a kitten to an adult. Since the spring of 2020, she has been invisible. She may have died from the collateral effects of Covid.

Anonymous, undated photos of dead jaguars in the backs of quads and pick-up trucks used to circulate on screens. This viral marketing attracts interest from customers.

Jaguar trafficking begins in the Amazon forest around the gold mines. Next to one authorised mine, there are illegal ones. The gold miners and the human fauna who are moving around the mines are poaching the jaguars with guns and traps. Another practice is to bait jaguars with dogs tied to trees. The bodies of the jaguars are sold to Chinese who trade in everything in the mining housing estates -the transaction is done in grams of gold- and are transported to Paramaribo, the capital, where workshops are making as many products and profits possible from them.

The teeth and claws are processed into amulets and jewellery sold in bazaars for 200 Surinamese dollars each, or about 30 US\$. Most of these trinkets are smuggled into China by post, in the accompanied luggage of expatriates, or in maritime containers loaded with tropical timber harvested in Suriname by Chinese companies. A jaguar fang in Beijing sells for 10 to 100 times more expensive than in Paramaribo.

The skin is removed. It is sold for between 500 US\$ and 5000 US\$ on the local market. The body is then boiled for 5 days. The fat is skimmed off and cooked at low heat for another 2 days. The viscous and dark glue is then stored in 500 mg jars. The skinnersmelters get 20 to 30 ones from a jaguar corpse. A jar sells for around 180 Sr\$ or 25 US\$ in local bazaars. Introduced in China, it sells for 20 times that amount. Jaguar glue is supposed to cure rheumatism and improve the sexual performance of consumers. It is a substitute of tiger glue.

The Chinese community has been growing in Suriname for the past twenty years. China is building roads, dredging the Suriname river, modernising the capital's airport and deploying the Internet. According to Vanessa Kadosoe, the jaguar officer at the NGO NeoWild, the decline in the jaguar population in Suriname goes hand in hand with the increase in Chinese influence. Chinese investors are seeking to acquire gold mines in what people on the coast call "the interior", i.e. the deep Amazon which, from

Kwamalasamutu to Benzdorp on the border with French Guiana, is hosting the last jaguars. During the Covid-19 lockdown, the Brownsberg national park was deserted by the tourists and invaded by the gold diggers, who on occasion are jaguar seekers. Maybe they poison them with cyanide in the waterholes. There is no reliable inventory of the species in this country of 163,270 km².

InSight Crime, September 24, 2020; Mongabay, February 26, 2021.75

THE GOLDEN TEETH

All of Latin America's big cats are endangered. They are losing their habitat and their prey. Once dead, they lose their teeth.

The big cat poaching value-added chain in the 19 continental countries of Central and South America works in the same way as the waste recovery industry. No longer usable big cats are sold in spare parts, paws, skeletons, claws, bones, tails, skulls.

The teeth segment has been emerging for a few years and is becoming a major export market. The decapitated or toothless bodies of injured jaguars, poached ocelots and pumas, are found along the roadsides, in the landfills and in the trucks of the pick-ups. Wildlife trafficking attends to the most urgent and practical. Smuggling teeth is much easier than smuggling a skin and brings in more money. When the human race wears a jaguar's tooth around its neck, it hopes to have the stealth and speed and to establish itself in the urban jungle as the jaguar establishes himself in his Amazonian jungle. To have part of the jaguar's power, he is ready to pay the price. A nice jaguar fang sells for 3,000 US\$ in China or to Chinese businessmen around the world. By contagion, the "teethmania" is spreading in other strata of the world's population. Only the teeth of big cats are sought after, and first and foremost the canines. The longer and sharper they are, the more valuable they are to the reusers, who wear them as amulets or use them to decorate their houses and offices. There would be nothing better than a jaguar's tooth hanging on a computer to make business jump. Only jaguars (average weight 130 kg) pumas (80 kg) and ocelots (20 kg) have this privilege to have post-mortem reused. At this stage, the teeth of margays and pampas cats are not part of the market yet.

Sources: "On the Trail" n°13 p.158, n°23 p.191, n°25 p.169, n°26 p.104, n°27 p.178, n°28 p.185, and Morcatty TQ, Bausch Macedo JC, Nekaris KA, Ni Q, Durigan CC, Svensson MS, Nijman V. "Illegal trade in wild cats and its link to Chinese-led development in Central and South America". Conserv Biol. 2020 Dec;34(6):1525-1535. doi: 10.1111/cobi.13498. Epub 2020 Jun 24. PMID: 32484587.^{75bis}







JAGUARS - followed

VENEZUELA

July 2020

Zulia State, Venezuela

Luis Flores, Jomar Vargas, Rafael Bracho Narváez and Ángel Bracho Narváez were arrested. They are accused of having poached a jaguar on the banks of the Maracaibo Lake. The cat was butchered, skinned and eaten. The bandits did not have time to sell the skin. This poaching job is the work of experienced traffickers. The jaguar went quickly from living to dead, and from table to bedside rug. El Universal, July 20, 2020.⁷⁶

PUMAS - *Puma concolor,* Appendix II, except the populations of Costa Rica and Panama which are listed under Appendix I.

AMERICA

BRAZIL

September 18, 2020 Campinorte, State of Goiás, Brazil

Francisco Corrêa Sobrinho, former mayor of Campinorte, posed proudly next to a dead puma hanging on a butcher's hook. He claimed that the cat had been killed by his hunting dogs. The autopsy revealed that his body was riddled with bullets. G1, September 18, 2020.⁷⁷



CHILE

Mid-September 2020 Pemuco, Ñuble Region, Chile

A butchered and decapitated puma has been found. Puma meat, as well as their teeth, are the object of smuggling. The meat trafficking is regional, the teeth are trafficked internationally. Meganoticias, September 12, 2020.⁷⁸

EUROPE

POLAND

July 10, 2020 Ogrodzieniec, Zawiercie County, Silesian Voivodeship, Poland

A former soldier who had served in Afghanistan was raising a puma as his son. When the police and the veterinarian came to seize the animal and take it to the Poznan zoo, father and son fled into the forest.

DPA, July 11, 2020.79

BOBCATS - Lynx rufus, Appendix II.

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

August 4, 2020

Molalla, State of Oregon, United States of America

The county deputy sheriff is mixed up in some nasty business. He has pleaded quilty to several charges of breaking law



guilty to several charges of breaking laws and regulations on fishing, capturing and hunting wild animals. He is accused, especially, of trapping 4 bobcats. Two skins were seized from his home. He had an agreement with a taxidermist that he knew who had them sent to a tannery in California, outside of legal circuits and without revealing his identity. He risks being dismissed from his position. A sort of wise-persons' committee from the Oregon police will make a decision in the coming weeks and months.

State of Oregon, November 19, 2020; Oregon Daily News, March 17, 2021.⁸⁰



SWITZERLAND

August 16, 2020

Dorénaz, Valais Canton, Switzerland Between 2011 and 2015, 17 snares were found in a 4 km² area near the village by a team of scientists led by the University



of Berne. They were carefully positioned along the bobcat's main migration corridor between the Northern Prealps and the southern part of the canton of Valais, set by people who know bobcats and their paths very well, which led the researchers to suggest that there was collusion between the rangers and the poachers. The study was prepublished on August 16 in the review bioRxiv. In a news report aired on August 23 on Radio Télévision Suisse, the hunting department stated that they were "actively fighting the poaching of all wild animals, including the bobcat, through commitment from their 25 game wardens and their heads of sectors." "The canton of Valais strongly condemns acts of poaching committed within its territory." The RTS report wonders about their virtuous declarations, and points out that in 10 years (2009-2019) only 2 complaints were filed for bobcat poaching in the Valais, and that the sanctions were limited to minor fines and temporary hunting license revocations. Raphael Arlettaz and the coauthors of the study recommended that Switzerland and other European countries where poaching threatens large animals of prey "investigate at the highest possible administrative levels or create a centralized judiciary police force to investigate major environmental crimes, including illegal hunting of large carnivores." Large carnivore includes not only bobcats, but also wolves. Three rangers, reserve or active, are suspected of subscribing to the adage in force in the Valais according to which "a good bobcat is a dead bobcat".

Large predators in the canton of Valais, see "On the Trail" n°12 p.101, 16 p.63 and 21 p.71.

Illegal hunting threatens the establishment of a bobcat population and highlights the need of a centralized judiciary approach. Raphaël Arlettaz, Guillaume Chapron, Marc Kéry, Elisabeth Klaus, Stéphane Mettaz, Stefanie Roder, Sergio Vignali, Fridolin Zimmermann, Veronika Braunisch

bioRxiv 2020.08.16.252890; doi: https://doi.org/10. 1101/2020.08.16.252890.⁸¹

MULTI-FELINES



CAMEROON

August 10, 2020 Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon



Seizure of a lion's skin with its head and a leopard skin in a craftsman's home. One arrest, followed by the arrest of the supplier, a retired school teacher. There are fewer than 300 lions left in Cameroon. EAGLE, August 10, 2020; Alwihda Info, August 14, 2020.⁸²

NAMIBIA

July 22, 2020

Wanaheda, Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia Seizure of a lion's skin and a cheetah's skin. Two people were taken in for questioning. The Namibian, August 4, 2020.⁸³

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Early August 2020 Cincinnati, State of Ohio, United States of America



Ryan J. Gibbs was sentenced to one year on probation, 80 hours of community

work, if possible in an Ohio charity organization that works on wildlife conservation, and a fine of 100,000 US\$ to be paid to the Lacey Act Reward Account for having illegally purchased a tiger skin in August 2019, a stuffed lion and two stuffed puffins, a leopard skin and a sawfish rostrum.

The Lacey Act Reward Account is used to reward informers for tips on wildlife trafficking. Fox 19, August 12, 2020.⁸⁴

September 16, 2020 Charlestown State of

Charlestown, State of Indiana, United States of America

It's not Netflix, but it's very similar. After Joe the Exotic, a new Tiger King was brought down from his pedestal. He is not in prison, he is on the run. Tim Stark's tigers and the lions in his cruel and infamous zoo called Wildlife in Need were seized and taken to a certified refuge.

PETA, September 18, 2020.85

MEXICO

Mid-September 2020 Culiacán Rosales, State of Sinaloa, Mexico

Seizure of a jaguar, a lion, a Bengal tiger and 2 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) in a private home.

Noticieros Televisa, September 20, 2020.86

Wolves, Asiatic wild dogs, Jackals, African wild dogs and Hyenas



Coyote (*Canis latrans*), strait of Juan de Fuca, United States of America.



COTE D'IVOIRE

September 8, 2020

Abidjan, Autonomous District of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The zoo was temporarily closed after a hyena (family Hyaenidae) escaped. After an escape of several hours, he was captured and returned to his enclosure. Before that incident, the zoo's reputation had already been tarnished by pictures of a skeletal lion circulating on social media. CGTN, September 9, 2020.¹

NAMIBIA

Early September 2020 Bwabwata National Park, Zambezi Region, Namibia



In the past few years, the number of conflicts between farmers and African wild

dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) has been growing because of draughts. A 3-month-old wild dog, whose pack had killed a cow, was killed in reprisal. Such acts have become common in the park. According to the Cheetah Conservation Fund, if nothing is done, such acts could lead to the extinction of the species. There are fewer than 300 adult African wild dogs left in Namibia.

Africa Geographic, September 16, 2020.²



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

July 4-5, 2020

Valley Village, Los Angeles, State of California, United States of America Lisa Johnson Mandell launched a

GoFundMe campaign to pay for the



services of a trapper and get rid of a coyote (Canis latrans) that she considered to be a threat to the neighborhood. She specified that the covote would be trapped without cruelty. In fact, the juvenile coyote was captured in a gin trap that has been illegal in California since 1998. The little victim was only spotted by neighbors after several days of torture and moans. She was dying and the veterinarians had no other choice but to put her to sleep. Ms Mandell's GoFundMe campaign had collected 3,615 US\$, a lot more than similar campaigns in other states. Near Hollywood, the residents do not appreciate wild animals. The NGO Project Coyote tries to facilitate coexistence between human and animal populations and is indignant: "Professional trappers and so-calledpest control companies continue to use gin traps." "When traps are set, the law requires that they be checked every day and that every local resident give written authorization for their use." In this case and in many others, the law was not applied. Project Coyote, July 16, 2020.3

July 27, 2020

Wedge Mountains, State of Washington, United States of America

The Wedge wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) pack is the target of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Lethal removal of the last adult male and the last adult female has been confirmed. "WDFW is still killing wolves to benefit the profit margins of private businesses," objected the Wolf Conservation Center. The authorities justified the dislocation of the pack because herds of domestic cattle have been victims of attacks when they graze in the Colville National Forest, a mid-altitude forest that is better adapted to the wanderings of wild ungulates than cows.

Wolf Conservation Center, August 2020.⁴

August 2020

Alligator River, State of North Carolina, United States of America

Wild red wolves (*Canis lupus rufus*) are dying out. A 3-year-old female was shot on land that is not belonging to the State. She was from the famous Milltail pack. North Carolina is home to the last group of red wolves in the United States of America. There are fewer than 10 left. Contrary to gray wolves, the red wolf restauration plan has been a total failure.

Between 1987 and 2014, 386 red wolves died, including 121 who were poached. In 2018, the Federal courts ruled that the US Fish and Wildlife Service had the obligation to protect the species and that the authorization accorded to private property owners to shot red wolves on sight was illegal. Since then, the US FWS has not budged an inch in its doctrine. The red wolves' protected habitat is as big as a postage stamp and the maximum tolerated population is 15 individuals. No births have been reported in the past 2 years. The Milltail pack is no longer viable.

Canis lupus rufus, see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 96. Wolf Conservation Center, October 15, 2020.⁵

August 18, 2020

State of New Mexico, United States of America

Craig Thiessen was sentenced on May 24, 2018 to 10 years on parole and 2,300 US\$ in fines for having killed a Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*, Appendix II), wolf #1385, by beating it with a shovel (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.70). A report from the US Fish and Wildlife Service dated August 18, 2020 indicated that a second skeleton, that of wolf #1279, had been found near a concession attributed to Thiessen. His jaw seemed to have been cut off with a handsaw. Although Thiessen stated that he had "beaten" 2 wolves – in truth, he had actually tortured them – the report is recommending this investigation for closure as the statute of limitations for this violation have tolled.

Center for Biological Diversity, December 18, 2020; REPORT#: 2015203919R001, August 18, 2020.⁶

September 11, 2020

State of Washington, United States of America

Following Massachusetts, Arizona and Colorado, it is the State of Washington's turn to pass a ban on hunting contests. The Washington Predator Coyote Classic and the Lind Gun Club Coyote Hunt, among others, cost the lives of 1,427 coyotes (*Canis latrans*) between 2013 and 2018. Participants took pictures of each other next to heaps of dead animals. Center for Biological Diversity, September 11, 2020.⁷

September 24, 2020 Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, State of Oregon, United States of America

The future of the Cornucopia (Horn of plenty) wolf pack (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) is uncertain. The pack has lost its alpha male, whose body riddled with bullets was found on a junction of Route 7741. The police are offering a reward of 6,150 US\$ to anyone who can help identify the culprit. KVAL-TV, October 14 and 24, 2020.⁸

ASIA

INDIA

September 9 and 10, 2020 Masinagudi and Achakarai, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



The carcasses of 4 dholes, or Asiatic wild dogs (*Cuon alpinus*, Appendix II), have been found, 2 males and 2 females around 4 years old. They had been dead for several hours. A fifth was found the next day. The autopsy revealed that they had eaten the poisoned carcass of a axis deer (*Axis axis*).

The Hindu, September 9, 2020; Update News 360, September 10, 2020; The Times of India, September 10 and 11, 2020.⁹



SPAIN

August 20 and 29, 2020 Abelgas de Luna, Province of León, Autonomous Community of Castile and Léon, Spain

On August 20, an abandoned wolf cub (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), 2 or 3 months old, was taken in by the Guardia Civil and transferred to the veterinary hospital at the University of Léon. He had a plastic collar around his neck and was dragging a metal chain. He suffered from open and healed wounds. He showed signs of brutal captivity. He was entrusted to the CRAS (Centro de Recuperación de Animales Silvestres) in Valladolid, and died on August 22.

On August 29, another cub around the same age was seized in the home of a private individual. He was also in very poor condition. His prognosis is very pessimistic.

Wolves of the Autonomous Community of Castile and Léon, see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 96.

Redacción Diario de Valderrueda, September 3, 2020.¹⁰



FRANCE

July 5, 2020

Col du Lautaret, Le Monêtier-les-Bains, Department of Hautes-Alpes, France

The wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) was shot down even though he had turned his back on the flock of sheep, which was protected by nets, dogs and a donkey. The so-called "reinforced self-defense shooting" was filmed and published on social media by Corentin Esmieu, a mountain guide who has known the pack for several years.

Le Parisien, July 9, 2020; L'Obs, July 10, 2020.11

NORWAY

August 28, 2020 Norway

The regional hunting committees have ruled in favor of culling 44 wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II): the annual quota is 12 wolves, plus 5 packs for a total of 32 individuals living in Hornmoen, Hernes, Kynna, Aurskog and Rømskog (on the border with Sweden). The decision was confirmed by the government on October 8, after consultation with Sweden. There were apparently only 80 wolves left in the country before this "regulation."

NOAH, August 28, 2020; European Wilderness Society, September 9 and 30, 2020.¹²

RUSSIA

September 2020 - July 2021 Russia



Up for grabs. Arctic fox (*Vulpes lagopus*) rug, with head and teeth. A bargain for all those who can't afford a polar bear rug. Like the polar bear, the Arctic fox is white except for a few black hairs at the end of his tail. In the

Arctic winter, when the shoreline is empty of food resources, the white fox follows the polar bear and is satisfied with a few seal guts after his master's feast. An excellent investment. Wildlife traders are betting on global warming to extinguish the species for good within the next thirty years. 413 \in , free shipping.

StoreTaxidermy LLC (Etsy), Moscow, accessed 24 September 2020 and 9 July 2021. ; "Les canidés ", Le Monde animal en 13 volumes, tome XII, pp. 218-2019, sous la direction de Grzimek B. et Fontaine M. Éditions Stauffacher, 1971.¹³



CANADA

July 5, 2020

West Vancouver, Province of British Columbia, Canada

A smell of putrefaction disturbed a couple's walk. When they returned to the site a few days later, they discovered the carcass of a young American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) eviscerated. Poachers had cut him open in the abdomen to remove organs. Next to him were ice packs and 3 pairs of disposable gloves. The North Shore Black Bear Society and the Fur-Bearers association are offering a reward of 1,000 Canadian dollars (766 US\$) for any information leading to the identification of those responsible.

Shortly before, another bear killed by poachers was found near Abbotsford, 80 km from the previous one.

CTV News, August 25, 2020; CBC, August 25, 2020.¹

July 31, 2020

Deep Cove, Province of British Columbia, Canada American black bears (Ursus americanus, Appendix II) are hungry and scavenging in the metropolis open to the Pacific Ocean. Despite calls to keep food and leftovers out of the reach of peri-urban bears, the perversion of their diet is underway and the bear nicknamed Huckleberry eventually died from it. He was known to the residents of Deep Cove on the edge of the forests north of Vancouver and to the North Shore Black Bear Society, which put him back on the right track after reports from residents who were struck by this new kind of waste sorter. On July 31, Huckleberry – it is often the beginning of the end when a free wild animal earns a nickname and some popularity - after nibbling a few blueberries on the side of a road, was followed by a procession of curious onlookers and some self-appointed producers did not hesitate to open bins for the bear to dip into and to make images that might pick people up. The videos were spotted by the police and Huckleberry was captured and deliberately killed in the name of population protection.

In Coquitlam in June, another black bear was shot by police. He was accused of charging golfers and stealing their food.

In June, 2 people were reportedly bothered by a bear in Port Moody, as well as women in Prince George.

In the north of Vancouver, a public garden was temporarily closed after a bear bit a child.

North Shore Black Bear Society, August 5, 2020; CTV News, August 10, 2020.²

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

July 8, 2020

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, States of Montana, Wyoming and Idaho, United States of America



The San Francisco Federal Appeals Court has decided: the 700-and-so brown bears (Ursus arctos, Appendix II) in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem will remain protected by the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had taken them off of the list in 2017. According to the July 8 court decision, which confirms a decision by the District Federal Court in 2018, the removal of the brown bears from the list of endangered species was the "the result of political pressure by the states rather than having been based on the best scientific and commercial data." Environmental conservationists and native tribes were parties to the case. According to Sarah McMillan, the spokesperson for the NGO WildEarth Guardians, the hunting authorization would have hindered encounters between the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem brown bears and outsiders and would have led to poor genetic diversity and threatened the future of the population. The New York Times, July 10, 2020.3

September 1st, 2020 - June 9, 2021 Red Lake Indian Reservation, State of Minnesota, United States of America Brett James Stimac, 41 years old,

pleaded guilty to wildlife trafficking and trespassing on Indian territory.



He used a bow and arrow to kill an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) weighing 317 kg, despite a ban on bear hunting for anyone who does not belong to the Indian community. The wounded bear fled, but Stimac found him the next day. Unable to move or skin the carcass, he cut off the bear's head and paws as trophies and cut out 32 kg of meat, before posting a picture of his exploit on Facebook.



He was sentenced to 15 months in prison followed by one year of supervised release and a fine of 9,500 US\$.

The Star Tribune, September 17, 2020; Duluth News Tribune, September 18, 2020; US Department of Justice, June 9, 2021.⁴

September 29, 2020

Near Coyote Meadows Road, State of Idaho, United States of America

The brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) wore a radio-collar that showed he was no more on the move. He was found with a bullet in his side. The trail of blood indicated that he had been injured in a nearby clearing.

Idaho News, October 8, 2020.5

Year 2020

States of New Hampshire and Vermont, United States of America

1,183 bears hunted in New Hampshire over the course of the year 2020, an increase of 33% compared to 2019 and 42% compared to the average of the past 5 years.

Same trend in Vermont, where 914 bears were killed in 2020.

Sport hunting was in full swing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fox News, January 21, 2021; New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game.⁶

MEXICO

August 2020

San Pedro Garza García, State of Nuevo León, and Sierra El Nido, State of Chihuahua, Mexico

The male bear, 96 kg, was "socialising with walkers" in Chipinque park. For fear of things getting out of hand, he was captured and transferred to the veterinary school in Nuevo Leon. It was then decided to castrate him before his release to avoid hybridisation between the *Ursus americanus eremicus* subspecies (to which he belongs) and the *Ursus americanus amblyceps* subspecies, which may in some circumstances share the same range.

The Profepa prosecutor is demanding formal evidence about the necessity and effectiveness of the emasculation of the bear, who was released in the Sierra El Nido after being fitted with a geolocation prosthesis that will alert the services if he comes back to the towns to hunt down food waste.

Profepa, August 9 and 12, 2020.7



CHINA

July 2020

Tengchong County, Yunnan Province, China

To lure customers into his restaurant, between January and December 2018, a man bought fresh Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) paws and nearly 90 kg of muntjac (genus *Muntiacus*) meat from ruffians on the Myanmar border. The paws were estimated at 24,000 yuan, or 3,400 US\$, each. The former muntjac had been butchered and cut up into 305 portions, then stored in the freezer. The civil court case was settled by a payment of several thousand yuan in damages. The people's court is composed of 3 magistrates and 4 representatives of the people. The criminal sanction will be announced at a later date. Yunnan.cn, July 15, 2020.⁸

August 5, 2020 Baishan, Jilin Province, China

The trial has begun in a case involving smuggling bear bile and musk from musk deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II).

On April 23, 2018, Xie sold to Dong 3 items made from bear bile, including 2 made with brown bear bile (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) and the third with Asian black bear bile (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), plus 2 articles containing musk. A middleman took a bus from Baishan to the Changbai Korean autonomous Xian to make the delivery. Dong was taken by surprise at the bus station when he recovered his purchases. Sohu, August 10, 2020.⁹

August 19, 2020 Daluo, Yunnan Province,

China. Border with Myanmar.

A Chinese national arriving from Myanmar goes to the border control post: in his baggage, customs officers found 10 boxes, each containing 3 vials of powdered bear bile.



Chinese Customs, August 25, 2020.¹⁰

September 2020

Nancha County, Heilongjiang Province, China

Opening of the trial of Cheng Mouen and 6 accomplices for trafficking in bear paws (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) and poaching of Siberian roe deer (*Capreolus pygargus*). The investigation also reportedly resulted in the seizure of 500 kg of agricultural explosives and detonators, 2,300 rounds of ammunition and several firearms. Dbw.cn, September 22, 2020.¹¹

SOUTH KOREA

End of July 2020 South Korea

Animal rights advocates are asking the government to act in favor of closing bear farms. Over 400 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) are still closed up in cages and traded upon their bile. In South Korea, it is legal to kill an exploited bear as soon as he reaches 10 years old. The situation is even more serious because with Covid-19 breeders, are having economic difficulties and have trouble paying for food for the bears. BBC, July 21, 2020.¹²

On the Trail n°30. Robin des Bois

August 2, 2020 Chhindauli, Mahasamund State of Chhattisgarh, India



Ramji Nishad, Nainsingh, Devlal Chakradhari and Jaiprakash were arrested, thanks to sniffer dogs. They are suspected of being behind the electrocution of 2 sloth bears (Melursus ursinus, Appendix I), a male and a female, near the village. Electric cables were found in their homes.

Hindustan Times, August 6, 2020.13

REPEATED OFFENSE August 21, 2020

Bhaisdehi, Betul District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The Melghat wildlife crime cyber cell had been tracking them for 2 months. Phony buyers contributed to their fall. When the Department of Forests agents arrested them, the 4 traffickers were trying to negotiate the sale of tiger or leopard claws (analyses will clarify that), sloth bear claws (Melursus ursinus, Appendix I) and a wild boar jaw. Their line of defense is to claim that the parts they were selling came from animals who had died naturally in the forest. But one of them already has a record as a tiger poacher.

The Times of India, August 22, 2020.14

MALAYSIA

July 10, 2020 State of Sabah, Malaysia



A dog killed a female Malayan sun bear (Helarctos malayanus, Appendix I) near Kampung Melangkap, in the Kota Marudu district. The dog's owner recovered the bear cub. He kept him in a chicken coop. One year later, on January 8, 2015, he handed him over to the BSBCC (Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Center). After 5 years of rehabilitation, Montom "had proven that he was ready to be reintroduced into the wild." He is the 8th bear that the center has released. The exact location was not given, so as to avoid any risk of poaching. 42 bears still live in the conservation center in Sandakan. Daily Express, July 14, 2020; The New Straits Times, July 12, 2020.15

VIET NAM

July 1st, 2020 Gia Lai Province, Viet Nam

Education for Nature Vietnam – Vietnam announced today that the province has become the 36th in the country in which no more bear bile "farms" have been identified. The last plantigrade still captive was transferred recently to a sanctuary. According to the NGO, the bear bile market in Viet Nam has plummeted.

ENV, July 1st, 2020.16

July 27, 2020 - March 18, 2021 Xa De Phin, Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam



Sung A Do was arrested on Highway 12. He was waiting for customers for 2

young Himalayan black bears (Ursus thibetanus, Appendix I). Sung A Do claimed to be a middleman working for a certain Hang A Tu. He thought he would sell the bear cubs for 50 million dong (2,157 US\$). They were entrusted to the bear sanctuary in the province of Ninh Binh.



He was sentenced in March 2021 to 3 years in prison.

ENV, July 27, 2020 and March 18, 2021; Công an nhân dhân, July 26, 2020.17

End of July 2020 **Da Nang Province, Viet Nam**

The owner of 4 Himalayan black bears (Ursus thibetanus, Appendix I) contacted Education for Nature – Vietnam to hand them over to a sanctuary. Good news of significant importance since they are allegedly the last captive bears in the province. ENV, July 30, 2020.18



August 15, 2020 Hanoi, Viet Nam

A woman in possession of 4 Asian black bear paws (Ursus thibetanus, Appendix I) was arrested. She had come from the province of Ha Giang to deliver them to a client. ENV, August 17, 2020.¹⁹

September 23, October 1st, 2020 Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam

An Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) breeder was arrested, caught red-handed selling 2 paws. He claims they came from a bear who had died at his farm. Shortly after he was arrested, he decided to put an end to his ursine activity. His 2 last bears were transferred to the Cat Tien refuge after 18 years in captivity. The province no longer has any bear breeders.

ENV, September 24 and 25 and October 2, 2020.20



SPAIN

September 1st, 2020

La Pernía, Province of Palencia, Autonomous Community of Castile and Léon, Spain

The skeleton of a brown bear (Ursus arctos, Appendix II) was found in the Las Fuentes Carrionas y Fuente Cobre-Montaña Palentina national park. The next day, agents from the wildlife protection service (Seprona) and the regional Junte took samples from the remains for analysis, to determine the cause of death.

Diario de Castilla Y Leon, September 5, 2020.²¹

RUSSIA

July 14, 2020

Khorinsky District, Republic of Buryatia, Russia

The rangers spotted a vehicle coming out of the forest in the night and driving toward them, 24 km from the village. When the driver noticed them, he turned around and went deep into the taiga. They pursued the car, saw a bag thrown out of the window and then lost sight of the car. But they had time to write down the license plate number. The bag contained 4 brown bear paws (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), a knife, cartridges and a flash light. The police had no trouble finding the poacher, the car owner's son, as well as the rifle hidden in the neighbor's courtyard. The bear's carcass was found in the taiga. The bear's economic value was estimated at 180,000 rubles (2,580 US\$). The Baikal Daily, July 22, 2020.²²



Las Fuentes Carrionas y Fuente Cobre-Montaña Palentina National Park. Photo Paulo Etxeberria

GAZELLES, ANTELOPES, KUDUS, SEROWS, URIALS, BUSHBUCKS, MARKHORS ...



Bush duiker (Sylvicapra grimmia). Image Biodiversity Heritage Library

WESTERN AFRICA

BURKINA FASO

July 8, 2020

Manga, Zoundwéogo Province, Burkina Faso

The man was arrested inside of the Pô-Nazinga-Sissili protected area, on May

17, 2020. He had killed at least one bush duiker (*Sylvicapra grimmia*), one bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*) and one roan antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*). He was sentenced to one million francs CFA (1,720 US\$) in fines, and 2 million francs CFA (3,440 US\$) in damages.

The Pô-Nazinga-Sissili ecosystem connects the Kaboré-Tambi national park and the protected Nazinga forest. It enables large mammals like elephants to migrate between Burkina Faso and Ghana.

Minute.bf, July 26, 2020.1

NIGER

Early July 2020

Termit and Tin-Toumma National Nature Reserve, Niger

Mass murder of approximately 40 dorcas gazelles (*Gazella dorcas*, Appendix III in Algeria and in Tunisia). Seizure of 28 heads, around 10 skins, 20 dried carcasses, all headed for the bushmeat market, and 4 motorcycles. Four poachers were arrested. They lived within the reserve. AFP, July 7, 2020.²

Early July 2020 Bambilor Private Reserve, Dakar Region, Senegal

One after another, the national media, with Source A leading the pack, shot down Abdou Karim Sall, Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development. The affair shook up the political parties and exposed the platform Avenir Senegaal bi ñu bëgg and the spokesperson of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To put out the fire, President Wade ordered an investigation and told his party, the PDS (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais) to press charges with the public prosecutor for "crime against nature".

Abdou Karim Sall proceeded to transfer 6 oryx gazelles (genus Oryx) from the Ranerou public reserve to his personal reserve in Bambilor, 40 km north of Dakar. After 300 km of exhausting travel in a pick-up truck, 2 gazelles were dead. In a press release as long as the Senegal River, Abdou Karim Sall denied any conflict of interest and the accusations of white collar poaching. "Breeding wild animals, just like forestry, is an agricultural activity, in the broad sense of the term. Consequentially, it can be done by any citizen who has the capacity and respects the required conditions." He added that the agreement between his Bambilor farm and the national parks authority was signed by the farm manager. Sall did not dirty his pen in the transaction.

The final blow came from the website Le360afrique. com. The 2 dead gazelles, worth the economic equivalent of $30,000 \in$, allegedly ended up barbequed for a feast in honor of the minister.

The secretary general of the PDS received a mandate to press charges "against the unworthy Minister of the Environment so that no one would be tempted in the future to unjustly appropriate property of the State, in other words of the Senegalese people."

The Israeli Ambassador to Dakar contacted the Senegalese diplomatic branch and requested an explanation. In 1999, Israel gave to Senegal 8 oryx gazelles to contribute to repopulating the West African savanna.

Source A, July 6, 2020 ; Libération Sénégal, July 8, 2020.³



MALAWI

End of July 2020 Salima, Central Region, Malawi Five years in prison for a trap-layer.



Twenty traps were found and dismantled in his area of malfeasance. He was caught

red-handed transporting a dead duiker (genus *Cephalophus*) in the Dedza Salima escarpment forest reserve.

Wildlife Action Group, July 27, 2020.⁴

ZIMBABWE

September 7, 2020 Kasibo, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Three men were surprised by herders looking for a cow. They were in the



process of butchering 6 greater kudus (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*). They asked the herders to look the other way in exchange for a little meat, to no avail. When the police arrived, they found only 4 metal traps. The footprints led the police to the trio, 1.5 km away, busy cooking in another of their hideouts. Two of them managed to get away. Patrick Dube, 68 years old, was arrested. Seizure of 6 greater kudu skulls, 24 hoofs and skins, 6 bags of semi-dried meat, 3 axes, knives and metal wires. The Chronicle, September 11, 2020.⁵

SOUTHERN AFRICA

NAMIBIA

July 11, 2020

Namib - Naukluft National Park, Namibia

They were moving oryx carcasses (genus *Oryx*) from one pick-up to another. A ranger spotted them. They ran away. In some dumpsters, there were 7 oryx, some bags, blankets and poacher's gear. The oryx meat was estimated at a little over 1,000 US\$. The Namibian, July 15, 2020.⁶

September 2, 2020

Ndiyona, Kavango East Region, Namibia

Lukas Kandware and Diaas Mangundu were arrested in possession of a greater kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) carcass.

The Namibian Sun, September 9, 2020.7

September 3 and 10, 2020

Onandjamba, Oshikoto Region, and Onaanda, Omusati Region, Namibia

- Vilho Shishitwomunhu was arrested in possession of a steenbok antelope carcass (*Raphicerus campestris*).

- Seven arrests. Seizure of a steenbok antelope carcass, a vehicle, a gun and 17 rounds of ammunition.

Republikein, September 9, 2020 ; The Namibian Sun, September 16, 2020.⁸

September 9, 2020 Zambezi Region, Namibia

Kaela Mushambe and Njanji Samwak were arrested. They are accused of having poached a southern lechwe (*Kobus leche*, Appendix II).

Intelligence Support Against Poaching, September 22, 2020.9

September 19, 2020 Tsumeb, Oshikoto Region, Namibia

Appearance of Sydney Robert Mupetami, Festus Ochurub, Bonnie Neidel and Mathias Uixab for the poaching of 4 duikers (*Sylvicapra grimmia*). Intelligence Support Against Poaching, September 22, 2020.¹⁰

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

CAMBODIA

Early August 2020 Chambok, Kampong Spoe Province, Cambodia Wood traffickers and

animal poachers often work together, with the poachers supplying the wood dealers with meat on their work sites. Sometimes the loggers and the poachers are the same people. A Wildlife Alliance raid led to the seizure of 227 pieces of Siamese rosewood (Dalberaia cambodiana, Appendix II), cut into



boards, 1 Chinese serow (*Capricornis milneedward-sii*, Appendix I) and 1 Indian muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjak*) carcass.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, August 4, 2020.11

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 30, 2020

Mohammadpur Rohi, Fatehabad District, State of Haryana, India

The village inhabitants surprised 2 poachers, one night, in the process of skinning a nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). They got the hoodlums under control and alerted the Wildlife Department.

The Tribune, July 31, 2020.12

August 5 and 6, 2020

Putsura and Baskepi, Balrampur District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

In total, 22 arrests for the slaughter of a nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) in the Chando forest on August 3. Four rudimentary front-loading rifles and the antelope carcass were seized.

Outlook India, August 7, 2020.13

August 15, 2020 Bhiyansar, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India

It was a shepherd, taking his animals to graze near the village, who found the carcasses of 3 chinkaras (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and who informed the police. They had been killed and cut up during the night. The Department of Forests agents noted the presence of tracks corresponding to a tractor with a trailer. According to Radheyshyam Pemani, an activist for local wildlife conservation, there are gangs of poachers who are roaming the district to supply hotels with meat.

The Times of India, August 17, 2020.¹⁴

August 21, 2020 Rawatkhera, Hisar District, State of Haryana, India

Local inhabitants found the remains near the village and informed the forest rangers. The post-mortem examination of the blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan and in Nepal) revealed that the animal had been shot.

The Times of India, August 23, 2020.¹⁵

September 7, 2020 Hunasihala, Koppal District, State of Karnataka, India

A gang specialized in blackbucks (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Pakistan and in Nepal) has been dismantled. Thugappa, Sharanappa Amarappa Chauhan, Mallayya Hiremath, Shivayya Hiremath, Sangappa Kattimani and Hanumanth Kattimani were trying to sell 20 skins for 50,000 rupees (683 US\$) each. They had already sold the meat. In some burlap bags, the police also found 2 pairs of adult horns and a very young alive antelope. Their 3 motorcycles were also seized.

The Times of India, September 7, 2020.¹⁶

September 26, 2020 Hingoli District, State of Maharashtra, India

The Department of Forests announced that they had gotten their hands on Kisan Ghangale, Rustum Dhakre, Vitthal Pachpute, Gajanan Dhanve, Manohar Dhakre and Siddhanth Pachpute. A video on social media shows them using a net to capture a blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal and in Pakistan).

PTI, September 26, 2020.¹⁷

PAKISTAN

Mid-July 2020 Anar, Kerman Province, Iran



Two poachers heading to Teheran were arrested. In their car, the police found an urial (Ovis aries, Appendix II) that had been butchered, a firearm and 26 rounds of ammunition. They were required to pay an administrative fine equivalent to 5,950 US\$. They risk from 3 months to 3 years in prison. IEW, July 17, 2020.18



July 25-August 2020 Mianjangal Protected Area and Fasa, Fars Province, Iran

- Two poachers arrested. They had just killed 2 female wild goats (Capra hircus aegagrus, Appendix III in Pakistan) in the Mianjangal Protected Area. The administrative fines are multiplied by 3 when the animals protected by law are females. They were therefore required to pay a fine equivalent to 35,710 US\$. They also risked up to 3 years in prison. - Because of their detailed confessions and their clean criminal records, the court ruled in favor of a 6-month sentence, plus a required donation to the local fire department of 10 fire extinguishers, 10 shovels, 10 protective overalls and safety boots and 3 fire hoses. If they do not make the donation, they will be required to stay in prison for 3 years. Their high tech weapon and the 19 rounds of ammunition were seized. IEW, August 14, 2020.19

End of September 2020 Chitral Gol National Park, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Arrest of Said Akbar, Saidur Rahman and Rozi Khan who had just poached and butchered a markhor (Capra falconeri, Appendix I) and left the horns and meat behind when the park rangers approached. Dawn, September 29, 2020.20



RUSSIA

September 2020 - July 2021 Russia

Up for grabs. Trophy of Siberian ibex on its rock. The Capra sibirica (Appendix III in Pakistan) used to bare mountain walls will faithfully keep you company. Be careful not to place it behind a



bay window. The trophy is so natural that it could attract wolves or bobcats.

1953 €. Free delivery.

StoreTaxidermy LLC (Etsy), Moscow, accessed 24 September 2020 and 9 July 2021.21

Saiga antelopes (Saiga tatarica, Appendix II): see in the chapter "Multi-species" on page 164 (14 and 27 September 2020) and page 176.



GIRAFFES AND OKAPIS

Giraffa camelopardalis, Appendix II

AFRICA

KENYA

July 30, 2020 Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

The ranch fence killed a giraffe. Requiring urgently water, she tried to get through fencing to drink deep and broke the tendons of her right leg. There was no other choice but to put her to sleep. SWT/KWS, July 2020.¹

August 15, 2020 Near Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya



The giraffe was wearing a wire at her neck's top, which would have eventually

strangled her. She collapsed 10 minutes after the anesthesia, supported by ropes and a veterinary team. The fragments from the trap were removed with a wire cutter.

SWT/KWS, August 2020²

Mid-August 2020 Tsavo Conservation Area, Kenya



Hunger due to Covid-19 and anger. A team from Telegraph UK was touring the conservation area with rangers. They came across a carcass that was nothing but bones. "They've even cut the meat out from in-between his ribs," murmured the patrol leader through clenched teeth. The poachers must have taken more than a ton of meat, including the testicles. When tourists were around, there were eyes everywhere. Now, it is up to the rangers to be everywhere. The traps are pervasive. People are cutting down more and more trees to make charcoal. In the villages, there are more mouths to feed than usual.

The Telegraph, August 22, 2020.³

September 1st or 2, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

The carcass of an adult male giraffe was found during a routine patrol. She was poached 2 or 3 days earlier during the night. The culprits were on motorcycles and left with the meat. Elephant Aware Masai Mara, September 4, 2020.⁴

September 22, 2020, and end of January 2021

Lepai, Kajiado County, Kenya Arrest of 12 suspects transporting a wheelbarrow full of 200 kg of giraffe meat



worth 200,000 shillings (1,866 US\$, or 9.3 US\$/kg) At the end of January 2021, 4 of them were sentenced to 8 months in prison or a fine of 50,000 shillings (463 US\$) and 4 others, having pleaded guilty, were sentenced to 3 months in prison or

a fine of 30,000 shillings (278 US\$). Wachira Kimaru, September 22, 2020 ; Kenya News, January 29, 2021.⁵

September 25, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

Lookouts spotted her; the giraffe was limping and overly exposed to lion attacks. The spear was visible, stabbed into her left thigh. After anesthesia and treatment, she went back to her herd. Prognosis is favorable.

SWT/KWS, September 2020.6

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

August 31, 2020 Lomela, Sankuru Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Claude Nyamugabo Bazibuhe, Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, expressed his consternation following the seizure of an okapi skin (*Okapia johnstoni*). He pointed out that it was illegal to kill, injure, capture, hold, sell or purchase an okapi or any product made from okapi, and he expects justice to be done.

Conserv Congo, September 1st and 4, 2020; Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, September 2, 2020.⁷



DONKEYS AND ZEBRAS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

September 5, 2020 Near Warrenton, Northern Cape Province, South Africa



A truck accident on Route 12. The Hestony Transport trailer exposed a mass of Burchell zebra (Equus quagga) carcasses for all to see. The Emam Bux Meats Wholesale and Retail butcher, based Durban (KwaZuluin province), Natal was immediately accused via social networks.



They defended themselves and obtained proof from the transporter that the truck was coming from the Limpopo province and going to the West Cape province.

SA Long-distance Truckers, September 5, 2020 ; Elizabeth Margaret Steyn Foundation, September 7, 2020; DFA, September 8, 2020.1

KENYA

July 9, 2020 Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenva



During this Covid-19 period and the

corresponding resurgence of traps, zebras are paying a high price. The mobile veterinary unit was able to save 2 of them. One of them risked being strangled by the metal trap that he had managed to get out of. The other had been dragging a metal circle on his rear left leg for several days. The metal was digging deeper and deeper into his leg.

SWT/KWS, July 2020.2



August 1st, 2020 Rumuruti, Laikipia County, Kenya An adult male zebra was strangled by a noose. Deep wounds around his neck. Prognosis is favorable. SWT/KWS, August 2020.3



August 16, 2020

Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Meru County, Kenya The vets do not only take care of animals who are victims of men's traps. The adult female Grevy's zebra (Equus grevyi, Appendix I) was in trouble. She had escaped a lion attack and was out in the savanna, suffering from several bites. There are fewer than 2,000 specimens left, a few hundred in Ethiopia and perhaps over 1,000 in Kenya. Anesthesia, wounds cleaned, application of antibiotics, green clay and anti-inflammatories. Prognosis is favorable. SWT/KWS, August 2020.⁴

August 22, 2020

Kipini Conservancy, Lamu and Tana River Counties, Kenya The situation is becoming unbearable



in the Kipini Conservancy. Two zebras were freed from snares. Poaching is ferocious. The prognoses are favorable, but the 2 lucky ones could get caught again in other traps. SWT/KWS, August 2020.⁵

September 2020

Tsavo East National Park and Ikutha, Kitui County, Kenya

The situation is dramatic for zebras. Shortage of water and fodder. They are moving closer to villages and fields. Several carcasses have been found recently and in most cases, they are rotting and post-mortem examination is impossible. There was only one positive intervention when an adult female in a village was anesthetized and moved away.

SWT/KWS, September 2020.6

NAMIBIA

August 31, 2020

Kamanjab, Kunene Region, Namibia Seizure of a zebra cut into pieces and 2 firearms. Isascar Gaingob was arrested.

The Namibian Sun, September 9, 2020.7

ZIMBABWE - BOTSWANA

September 8, 2020 Zimbabwe - Botswana

The Bo Chang slaughterhouse, in Francistown, Botswana, which closed temporarily in June 2017, opened up again in October 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.121). The Bo Chang traffickers lost no time. As early as November 2019, they started doing the rounds of the villages near the border with Zimbabwe, haggling over donkeys. According to the Botswana SPCA, in February 2020, 4 donkeys were brought into the slaughterhouse every week, and in March it was 50 per week. Starting in May, the figure went up to 100 donkeys per week. The donkeys came mostly from the Maun region (in the North-West district, Botswana). The donkeys also came from Zimbabwe. They were smuggled through routes that were familiar to ivory and pangolin traffickers.

A journalist from Oxpeckers met one commercial director of traffic in Nxele, on the Zimbabwean side. He stated, "In all border villages, donkeys are most sought-after because the Chinese abattoir in Francistown is failing to get its weekly requirement of 100 donkeys from Botswana. Middlemen even hire thieves to steal donkeys from Batswana who refuse to sell."

In Zimbabwe, a donkey sells for between 20 and 30 US\$. In Botswana, they sometimes sell for over 40 US\$.

Donkeys in Bostwana, see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 97, n°16 p. 110-111, n°17 p. 124, n°18 p. 121 and n°21 p. 121. Donkeys in Zimbabwe, see "On the Trail" n°16 p. 112, n°19 p. 131 and n°21 p. 122. Oxpeckers, September 8, 2020. ⁹

NIGERIA

July 27, 2020

Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Donkey skins worth an estimated 42 million nairas (109,158 US\$), approximately 1,340 hides, were burned. The seizures took place in underground warehouses and slaughterhouses, after 3 months of investigation and several warnings which went unheeded by the concerned parties. Sunday Audu, deputy controller-general at the Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS), pointed out that Nigeria is signatory to CITES and that wild African donkeys are protected under the Convention. "We don't want Nigerian donkeys to fade into oblivion like dinosaurs." Those who would like to go into the donkey hide trading business are requested to follow the regulations. The NAQS is working on defining a "win-win" plan for sustainable exploitation of donkeys. As the New Telegraph newspaper states, "The traffickers do not care about breeding donkeys



to ensure perpetuity of the goose that lays the golden eggs (...) they want instant profiteering." See "On the Trail" n°16 p. 112, n°18 p. 122, n°20 p. 130, n°23 p. 162, n°25 p. 121 and n°26 p.113. Vanguard News Nigeria, July 28, 2020 ; New Telegraph, August 14, 2020.⁸

HIPPOPOTAMUSES

Hippopotamus amphibius, Appendix II



GABON

Cf. page 21, chapter Elephants, July 10-August 14, 2020, Tchibanga, Nyanga Province, and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon.

MALAWI

August 2, 2020

Chowe, Mangochi, Southern Region, Malawi

Arrest following a tip-off of Matola Ishmael, 41-yearold, in possession of hippopotamus teeth. Malawi 24, August 5, 2020.¹

August 16, 2020

Nkhamenya, Central Region, Malawi

Justin Banda, aged 54, Eltone Ngoma, aged 71, and John Ngoma, aged 52, were arrested near the shopping centre with 4 hippopotamus teeth weighing 3 kg.

Nyasa Times, August 20, 2020.²

NAMIBIA

Cf. page 11, chapter Pangolins, September 30, 2020, Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

August 8, 2020

Kamutombo/Mukubu, Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Arrest of 2 people suspected of killing 3 hippopotamuses in the Kalume Ngongo River.

Agence d'information d'Afrique centrale, August 10, 2020.³



ZAMBIA

Cf. page 27, chapter Elephants, Early August 2020, Lusaka Province, Zambia.

ZIMBABWE

July 26, 2020

Zimbabwe Rescue of a hippopotamus injured by a trap. Tinashe Farawo, July 26, 2020.⁴





INDIA

August 24 and 28, 2020 Sorab Taluk, Shivamogga District State of Karnataka, India

Muzzaffar Hassan, Mohammed Danish and Zahir Khan thought they would get a good commission for the sale of 9 hippopotamus teeth, which they passed off as elephant ivory to buyers contacted



on WhatsApp. But their contacts were Forest Department agents. The 3 amateur traffickers revealed the identity of the suppliers. Four days later, Anil Parashekhar and Vishal alias Devaraj Pawar fell in turn. Vishal had supposedly stolen the teeth in Mapusa in the State of Goa from an 80-year-old woman who had reportedly inherited them from her father, an alleged forest ranger in Tanzania in his youth. It is also possible that the grandmother wanted to sell the teeth. The Forest Department is trying to clarify the matter.

The Times of India, August 26 and 30, 2020; The New Indian Express, August 29, 2020.⁵

BUFFALOS, BANTENGS, GAURS AND WILDEBEESTS



Gaur (Bos gaurus) near Khao Yai national park, Thailand. Photo Tontantravel

AFRICA

KENYA

Early July 2020 Mount Elgon National Park, Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya

The KWS is looking for a band of 6 buffalo and antelope poachers who are haunting the park and trafficking bush meat. Mont Elgon, see "On the Trail" n°3 p. 65, n°7 p. 102, n°21 p. 83, n°23 p. 4 and n°28 p. 100.

CGTN Africa, July 12, 2020.1

August 27, 2020 Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya



Fifty large mammal traps were dismantled. The poachers had time to

catch 4 blue wildebeests (*Connochaetes taurinus*), carve them on site and carry off the meat to be sold. Anne K. Taylor Fund, August 27, 2020.²

September 8, 2020

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

Camps, lodges, tents set up over the Mara River without an environmental impact assessment are hindering the great migrations of blue wildebeests (*Connochaetes taurinus*), zebras and gazelles between the Serengeti plains in Tanzania and the Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya. According to the East Africa Wild Life Society (EAWLS), which carried out an audit of tourist facilities in 2016, Mara Ngenche Safari Camp is not the only squatting settlement along the Mara, Talek, Olkeju Rongai and Sand Rivers. When there are no more places available during the peak season, the tourism industrialists set up new barnums and fun areas without permission and in total anarchy to increase accommodation capacity. The Mara River banks have reportedly seen a tourism boom after the reopening of the parks and the reduction of the Covid-19 restrictive measures.

Following on-site inspection, the NEMA (National Environment Management Authority) ordered the closure of the Mara Ngenche safari camp on September 17, but its owner filed an urgent application before the county court on September 21. The Narok High Court suspended the possible closure pending the hearing on the merits. According to a lodge operator who spoke on condition of anonymity, several animal migration corridors including the Loita one have been permanently obstructed by human activities.

Daily Nation, September 9, 2020; The Star, September 13, 2020; K24TV, September 18, 2020; Citizen Digital, September 23, 2020; The Citizen, September 25, 2020.³



CAMBODIA

End of July 2020

Chambok Station, Kampong Spoe Province, Cambodia

Seizure by rangers of 72 kg of gaur meat (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) in a house. Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, July 28, 2020.⁴

September 5, 2020

Ror Nhor, Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia

The rangers from the Lumphat Wildlife Sanctuary spotted 3 suspects on 2 motorcycles. Two of them ran away. Prut Kadol was arrested with a bag full of 76 kg of dried banteng meat (*Bos javanicus*) and an AK-47. He gave the names of his accomplices. The Phnom Penh Post, September 8, 2020.⁵

INDIA

July 12, 2020 Bodinayakanur, Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



A one-and-a-half-year-old gaur (Bos gaurus, Appendix I) was rescued by

the Pampadum Shola national park rangers, at the border between Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The young gaur had been under observation for several days as he wandered with his herd, with a snare around his neck. He was anesthetized and released. The investigation revealed 12 other metal and nylon snares set on a quince plantation. Two people were arrested.

The Times of India, July 14, 2020.6

July 24, 2020

Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Morigaon District, State of Assam, India

Flooding in the wildlife sanctuary is a good deal for poachers, according to the Morigaon police commissioner, Nandan Shing. He announced that two of them, Dipankar Biswas and Najrul Islam, were arrested after having killed 3 wild Asian buffalos (*Bubalus arnee*, Appendix III in Nepal). The Sentinel Assam, July 25, 2020.⁷

July 29 - August 4, 2020

Nandini and Kuman, Kabirdham District, State of Chhattisgarh, India



Finding of an electrocuted gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I). The investigation of the German shepherd Nero led his colleagues from the Department of Forests to 2 villages inside the Bhoramdeo wildlife sanctuary where the 9 poacher-electricians were arrested.

The Daily Pioneer, August 6, 2020; Outlook India, August 6, 2020.⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE

August 10, 16 and 17, 2020 Puncha, Malappuram District, State of Kerala, India



The rangers raided the home of Pullara Abu, alias Nanippa, on August 10 around midnight. He had been denounced. The man had fled, but the agents found 25 kg of what is presumed to be sambar meat (*Rusa unicolor*), as well as a homemade rifle and some knives. The agents pursued their investigation and arrested Suresh Babu, then Pullara Abu, Muhammed Busthan, Muhammed Ansif, Ashiq and Suhail. They admitted to having killed a female gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) in the forest. The investigation team followed their indications and found the skulls and bones and a fetus. The poachers had cut up nearly 200 kg of meat. Abu has been involved in other poaching cases in the past.

The News Minute, August 19, 2020; Mathrubhumi, August 19, 2020; The Indian Express, August 20, 2020.⁹

August 20, 2020 Gorumara National Park, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India



The first successful investigation led by the Belgian shepherd, Orlando, who was assigned recently to the Department of Forests. The remains of a gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) were discovered one morning within the national park. Some of the meat and the horns had been removed. A tip had reached the

ears of the rangers and led them to a village at the edge of the Borodighi tea plantation. Orlando detected partially cooked meat, as well as razorsharp weapons and alcohol hidden under the roof of a certain Somra Munda's cabin. He was arrested. The search is on-going for 7 accomplices.

The Siliguri Times, August 21, 2020 ; Hindustan Times, August 21, 2020.¹⁰

Tamsuli-Khandola, North Goa District, State of Goa, India

It took the combined effort of rangers and Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary staff to free a 7-year-old adult male gaur (*Bos gaurus*,



Appendix I) who was caught in a snare made of cords. The impressive bovine had been trapped for 24 hours near a field cultivated by Ulhas Gaonkar. It took 3 anesthesia darts to immobilize him. He was taken to the Bondla zoo before being released again into his natural habitat.

The Times of India, August 24, 2020.11

PHILIPPINES

August 28, 2020

Mounts Iglit – Baco National Park, Occidental Mindoro Province, Philippines

The rangers had never seen anything like it. There are apparently a few hundred tamaraws (*Bubalus mindorensis*, Appendix I) in the park. They used to be in the past sport hunted, and are now poached for food during the Covid-19 crisis, with the markets closed and shortages everywhere. ...

... One specimen, with the head and organs discarded, was finally found after a 2-day search. The meat of the peaceful beast was being smoked dried. A few days later, it would have been sold on the black market. The meat-traders told the rangers before escaping. Back in April, a sub-adult tamarau was found gutted.

Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 31, 2020.¹²

VIET NAM

July 13, 2020 Dong Nai Nature Reserve, Dong Nai Province, Viet Nam

Caught red-handed, 4 poachers sprayed the rangers with pepper spray then shot in the air before running off, leaving behind 4 bags full of 140 kg of gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I), bones and meat. The last census, in 2008, estimated the gaur population on the reserve at 300.

VnExpress, July 16, 2020.13



Tamaraws, Bubalus mindorensis. Image Biodiversity Heritage Library

DEER AND MOOSE

(NORTHERN AMERICA)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

July 2020

Rich County, State of Utah, United States of America



Another call for witnesses after the poaching of a male moose (Alces alces).

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, August 17, 2020.1

August 28, 2020 Cheboygan County, State of Michigan, United

States of America Jakob Gagnon, 21 years old, was picked up for poaching a female deer (Cervus elaphus) and for possession of cocaine. Logan Turbin, 22 years old, has already been sentenced to several fines and had his hunting license revoked for one year for having helped Gagnon cut up a deer. The local authorities are pursuing their investigation concerning 5 other deer poached over the course of 2019.

AP, September 4, 2020; MI News 26, September 3, 2020.²

September 2020

Pendleton County, State of West Virginia, United States of America



Michael Bitzer made the mistake of hunting on Matt Kontyko's in-laws' property. Matt Kontyko is a wildlife officer. Bitzer, who is known for trespassing to poach on private property,

posted a photo on Facebook in which he can be seen with a dead doe (family Cervidae). Kontyko recognized the family property and called the state police to arrest the poacher. He admitted that he had killed a deer whose antlers spread nearly 42 cm. Bitzer was sentenced to a total of 7,141 US\$ in fines and legal expenses. His hunting license was revoked for a period of 5 years.

Shortly after, Kontyko identified a young couple who had just killed a deer whose antlers spread 46 cm. The fine is expected to be even higher. Metro News, October 17, 2020.³

September 3, 2020

Franklin, State of Massachusetts, **United States of America**



Zachary Vaughan, 26 years old, was sentenced to 60 days in prison and a fine of

5,525 US\$ for poaching a female moose (Alces alces). His hunting license was suspended for 5 years. The case had been reported to the authorities on October 2019. Vaughan's home was searched. After having initially denied everything, he finally admitted the facts and faced 4 charges: poaching a moose (a protected species in the State of Massachusetts), possession of a loaded firearm, using artificial lighting, and hunting with artificial lighting.

Adirondack Almanack, September 30, 2020.4

Around September 23, 2020 Saint-Louis County, State of Missouri, United States of America



A house was searched in a case of suspected theft. In addition to the stolen objects (which included hunting decoys), the police seized 22 deer skulls (family Cervidae) with antlers, as well as a blue catfish (Ictalurus furcatus) that was illegally fished in the Mississippi.

According to the Missouri Department of Conservation, 296,516 deer were hunted in Missouri in 2020, compared to 285,873 in 2019. The increase is attributed to the pandemic. People kill deer, bear and moose to kill time.

Missouri Department of Conservation, September 23, 2020; Fox News, September 21, 2021.⁵

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

September 11, 2020

Galeão International Alrport, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Seizure of 66 deer antlers (family *Cervidae*) and 3 skulls with antlers from Asia or Europe. The skulls allegedly date from between 1926 and 1943, if we are to believe the indications written on the bones. They appear to be deer from Europe or Asia. Metropoles, September 11, 2020.⁶

ECUADOR

August 9, 2020

Cuenca, Azuay Province, Ecuador

Seizure of 7 white-tailed deer heads (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 2 skins and 16 legs of stuffed animals, 2 firearms and 79 rounds of ammunition. Only 2 elderly people were present in the villa at the time of the search. They claimed that all of those decorative objects had been in place for 10 years. They were not arrested. El Mercurio, August 9, 2020.⁷

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

July 13, 2020 Dalian, Liaoning Province, China

The parcel that was heading for Japan contained a bottle full of slices of antlers from a sika deer (*Cervus nippon*), according to the label. A few days later, the



experts from the Appraisal Center of Yunnan Province announced that the slices actually came from a red deer (*Cervus elaphus*), which cannot be transported or sold in China.

Chinese Customs, July 13 and August 1st, 2020.⁸

Early August 2020 Tianjin, Hebei Province, China

Seizure by customs of 2 antlers, assumed to be from sika deer (*Cervus nippon*) in a parcel coming from abroad.

Chinese Customs, August 11, 2020.9

September 2020

Dalian, Shenyang and Tieling, Liaoning Province, and Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China



Seizure in maritime containers and warehouses of over 200 tons of deer antlers, from approximately 50,000 animals, based on an estimation of 4 kg per antler. Yu, the head of the gang, bought antlers from foreign suppliers. Five importers are apparently involved. Searches took place in Dalian, Beijing, Shenyang and Tieling. The antlers were accompanied by forged customs documents. Chinese Customs, September 25, 2020.¹⁰

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 1st, 2020

Behali, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Biswajit Baruah and Akaman Lora Borah were cooking an Indian hog deer (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) on a tea plantation when the police and rangers interrupted their feast. The skins of 3 other hog deer were also seized. The animals had fled the Kaziranga national park because of flooding and the poachers were waiting for them in the hills.

Deccan Herald, July 1st, 2020; Sentinel Assam, July 2, 2020; India Blooms, July 4, 2020.¹¹

September 1st, 2020

Bagaribari, Darrang District, State of Assam, India Four poachers were arrested in possession of meat and skin from an Indian hog deer (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Three suspects are still on the run. Outlook India, September 1st, 2020.¹²

IRAN

July 7, 2020 Kerman Province, Iran

A suspicious motorcycle was tailed. After the prosecutor issued a search warrant, the motorcycle driver's house was searched. In



addition to a deer (family Cervidae) that he had killed during the night, there were 9 others in the freezer. The total included 7 females and 3 males. The administrative fine for poaching females is higher and the man will be required to pay 600 million tomans to the public treasury (142,860 US\$). IEW, July 10, 2020.¹³

GUANACOS AND VICUNAS

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

FAMILY AFFAIRS September 7, 2020 Chinchilla Alto-Andine Provincial Reserve, Province of Jujuy, Argentina



Seizure of 11 vicuna skins (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) and a 22-caliber rifle hidden behind some stones.

Charges were pressed against the poachers, a mother and son, who live in Catua 300 km from the reserve. Chinchillas (*Eriomis brevicaudata*) and vicunas live in the Chinchilla reserve.

El Tribuno, September 7, 2020; TodoJujuy, September 7, 2020.¹

September 24, 2020

Veintiocho de Julio, Province of Chubut, Argentina



Seizure on National Route 25 of approximately one ton of guanaco meat (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) in 27 bags. The driver, who was coming from Dalavon, 47 km away, was briefly questioned by the police.

Crónica digital, September 24, 2020.²

September 25, 2020 Fiambala, Province of Catamarca, Argentina



The high-speed chase began on Avenue Circunvalacion. The white 4x4 Toyota was intercepted on Boulevard Juan Manuel Salas. In it, the police officers found the carcasses of 9 vicunas (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II), 3 guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II), a Darwin's rhea (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II), and an armadillo (family *Dasypodidae*), as well as several 22-caliber rifles, ammunition and knives. Three men from Palo Blanco, 45 km away, were arrested. The carcasses were apparently incinerated. El Esquiu, September 26, 2020.³

September 26-27, 2020

General Roca, Province of Río Negro, Argentina A roadside check operation on Route 68. The truck driver was caught red-handed transporting 3 dead guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II). LM Cipolletti, September 30, 2020.⁴



GORILLAS, ORANGUTANS, CHIMPANZEES, MACAQUES, GIBBONS, DOUC LANGURS, LORISES AND OTHER PRIMATES

NORTHERN AFRICA

MOROCCO

Early July 2020

Ifrane National Park, Fès-Meknès Region, Morocco

A baby Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*, Appendix I) had been captured. One of the abductors was arrested. The pup was brought back to his mother after a 24-hour break in breastfeeding. His mother doted on him for hours at the top of a tree.

IFAW, July 7, 2020.1



WESTERN AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE

September 28, 2020 Côte d'Ivoire

Two young patas monkeys (*Erythrocebus patas*, Appendix II) were rescued from a truck driver who wanted to kill them and eat them with his family. They will be released after an observation period. Akatia, September 28, 2020.²



Pata, Erythrocebus patas

GUINEA

Mid-August 2020 Kindia, Kindia Region, Guinea

Anapproximately 10-month-oldfemalechimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) was rescued thanks to a joint operation between the Department of Water and Forests, the CITES focal point and the Upper Niger national park. She is in the competent care of the Chimpanzee Conservation Center.

Chimpanzee Conservation Center, September 4, 2020.³

LIBERIA

August 1st, 2020 Liberia

Two new residents at the Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection Sanctuary. They had been held in captivity for 4 years.

Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, June 10, 2020.⁴

September 3, 2020 Liberia

Seizure by a Forestry Development Authority team of a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) who had been held captive for 4 years by a police commissioner who obstinately refused to let him go. Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, September 3, 2020. ⁵



SIERRA LEONE

August 9, 2020 Sierra Leone

The young chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) was in a barrel quite near a village but hidden from nearly all. His



wrist had been cut to the bone by the trap that held him at the bottom of the barrel. The veterinary team from the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary saved him from amputation.

Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, October 12, 2020.⁶



ANGOLA

August 2020 Angola



The NGO Wild@Life rescued a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) from inside a container. He is thinking about the violence that he witnessed and experienced, and the others who have disappeared. His legs were injured by a rope while his abductors were on the run. On the black market, even maimed, he could have been sold for 13,000 US\$.

Wild@Life, September 10, 2020.7

CAMEROON

End of September 2020

Méfou National Park, Centre Region, Cameroon Two orphaned chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes,* Appendix I) arrived at the NGO Ape Action Africa sanctuary. One, 6 months old, is weak and undernourished. The other, 2 or 3 years old, is obese due to an imbalanced diet.

Ape Action Africa, September 30, 2020.8

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Early July 2020

Democratic Republic of the Congo

It's a race against the clock to locate a baby gorilla (Gorilla gorilla, Appendix I) who can be seen terrorized in a dark cellar. A video is circulating among members of the wildlife mafia. The prison guards' dialect gives some clues as to their whereabouts. They apparently have a second victim in their clutches.

Conserv Congo, July 4, 2020.9

July 10, 2020

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



Gorillas Doctors and park rangers freed a baby gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I) who was caught in a trap. Lwiro Primates, July 11, 2020.¹⁰





Two bonobos (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) were rescued. One was 7 years old and had been caught in a trap; the other was weak because undernourished, and suffered from a broken arm. Friends of Bonobos/Lola ya Bonobo, September 3, 4 and 22, 2020.¹¹

August 18, 2020

Mondombe, Tshuapa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo



Seizure of a young female bonobo (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) as a man was trying to sell her. She was entrusted to the care of the NGO Lola ya Bonobo. Friends of Bonobos/Lola ya Bonobo, August 18, 2020.¹²

19 août 2020 August 19, 2020 Maiko National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rangers rescued an 8-month-old female chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I). Lwiro Primates, August 19, 2020.¹³



September 10 and 15, 2020 Bukavu, South Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo



Two new orphaned chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) were taken in by the Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Center in just a few days, the 6th and 7th since the beginning of the year.

Lwiro Primates, September 10 and 15, 2020.14

September 15, 2020 Kinshasa, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

It is 10 p.m. On the national highway to 2 bikers Bandundu, are coming on. They were carrying a female chimpanzee (Pan troglodytes, Appendix I), barely 3 months old, hidden under a jacket. They thought they were going to sell her for 2,500 US\$, but their client turned out to be a police officer. The suspects are well-known to the police and to the NGO Conserv Congo.



Their arrest was the result of an investigation that lasted 2 years. They are said having already sold 11 great apes aged a few months.

Since the beginning of the year, Conserv Congo has taken part in the rescue of 10 primates, including 4 great apes.

Conserv Congo, September 15 and 24, 2020. 15

EASTERN AFRICA

MALAWI

Early September 2020 Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi

An orphan vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) weighing 800 g has been rescued. He just barely fits in one hand, but he was still big enough to be seen as a suspect tried to sell him along the side of the road. Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, September 4, 2020.¹⁶



Early September 2020 Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi

A female baboon (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), whose age is estimated at a year and a half, will never know freedom. Her detention conditions were so bad that she suffers from growth defects and a fragile skeleton, which will not allow her to interact with her peers. Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, September 4, 2020.¹⁷



MAURITIUS

Early August 2020 Mauritius Island, Republic of Mauritius

The NGO Action for Primates is begging the CEO of Astral Aviation to refuse to transport a group of longtailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) destined for laboratories that do animal testing in the United States. Mr Sanjeev Gadhia, Founder & CEO: *info@astral-aviation.com* Action for Primates, August 5, 2020.¹⁸

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UGANDA

September 10, 2020 Karuma, Western Region, Uganda

Robert Okello was arrested by Murchison Falls national park rangers. He was offering grilled antelope kebabs to hungry travelers on the road between Kampala and Gulu. In reality, the meat was baboon (*Papio* spp., Appendix II). Okello had hidden the remains of the animal, including his skin and head. They were seized. The authorities put out a reminder that eating meat without knowing its origin means potentially breaking the law, but also exposing oneself to viruses like Ebola. The Independent, September 11, 2020.¹⁹

September 8, 2020 – December 2020 Chirundu border post, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe. Border with Zambia

The truck left the Democratic Republic of Congo through the Mokambo border post and crossed Zambia before being intercepted in Zimbabwe. The ZimParks agents were alerted when they found primates that were not native to southern Africa. The shipment was heading for Polokwane in South Africa, a 3000 km long road trip. The 4 suspects in the truck tried in vain to bribe the agents in order to continue on their way.

News released at the beginning by ZimParks and the Congolese Minister of the Environment, Claude Nyamugabo, regarding the suspects' nationalities, the number of primates and their species were contradictory. The final version mentions 2 Congolese, a Malawian and a Zambian, probably repeat offenders. The vehicle was transporting in cages 12 golden-bellied mangabeys (Cercocebus chrysogaster, Appendix II), 5 greater white-nosed monkeys (Cercopithecus nictitans, Appendix II), 2 L'Hoest's monkeys (Cercopithecus Ihoesti, Appendix II), 2 grey-cheeked mangabeys (Lophocebus albi-gena, Appendix II), 2 Allen's swamp monkeys (Allenopithecus nigroviridis, Appendix II) and 2 lesulas (Cercopithecus lomamiensis, Appendix II), a species endemic to the Democratic Republic of Congo, discovered in 2007. The economic value of the 25 primates is estimated between 6,000 and 12,000 US\$ on the local market, and up to 10 times more in Asia. They are all juveniles, probably collateral victims whose parents were poached for bush meat and to sell their skulls, feet and hands. According to Jean Fleming of Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, "There seems to be an established trafficking route between the DRC and South Africa."

The 4 traffickers were sentenced in December 2020 to 6 months in prison. ZimParks is studying the possibility of repatriating the primates to the Democratic Republic of Congo.



The Times Live, September 11, 2020; Environews RDC, September 9, 2020; Conserv Congo, September 10, 2020; The Herald, September 19, 2020; National Geographic, December 21, 2020.²⁰



One of the 12 golden-bellied mangabeys seized



L'Hoest's monkey, Cercopithecus lhoesti



Grey-cheeked mangabey, Lophocebus albigena

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 10, 2020 Palm Beach, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa



The autopsy revealed that the 4 vervet monkeys (Chlorocebus pygerythrus,

Appendix II) were poisoned. Two were agonizing when help arrived on the paths where they had been dumped by a servant near a villa where they had been pets or security guards. They were put to sleep. Two others were already dead in the yard. South Coast Herald, July 10, 2020.²¹

Mid-July 2020

Taung, North West Province, South Africa

The SPCA freed 2 vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II). They were taken to the Johannesburg veterinary hospital. NSPCA, July 14, 2020.²²

September 3, 2020

Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Janette Morgans is taking the case to court, she wants to keep her vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II). Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, the wildlife management body in the province, wants to take them away from her. The founder of "The 3 Streams Monkey Sanctuary" claims that they cannot be released into the wild because of their health conditions. Ezemvelo, on the other hand, stressed that the vervets are unpredictable, that they can be dangerous for humans and attract wild vervets into urban areas.

The license that was issued to Morgans in 2010 was only valid for 6 months, and was supposed to give her the time to transfer the vervets living in Cowies Hill to a location that complied with regulations. It was not until 2018 that she transferred the monkeys to Peacevale, a more spacious place, still in the Durban greater metropolitan area. Primate ownership licenses can only be issued to circuses, research institutes and museums. She proclaimed the center to be a rehabilitation center, but that status appears usurped since she has sterilized certain residents and none have ever been released. News 24, September 4 and November 11, 2020.²³

NAMIBIA

July 21, 2020

Outapi, Omusati Region, Namibia

Immanuel Joseph has been indicted in compliance with the Nature Contravention Ordinance Act. He was in possession of a live vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II). The Namibian Sun, July 29, 2020.²⁴ LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

August 12, 2020

São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil

A man known as "Zé do Bode" was arrested. He was on the street, about to sell 2 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, syn. *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) for a little over 1,000 US\$ each. In his car, another monkey was also seized, as well as 8 empty monkey transportation cases, some credit cards and checks. Two passengers were also arrested. The trio is accused of trafficking wild animals as an organized gang. He sold monkeys, birds and reptiles on Internet. Ultimo Segundo, August 17, 2020.²⁵

August 26, 2020 Vitória do Jari, State of Amapá, Brazil

Starving and abused, a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, syn. *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) was saved by the police. A man was arrested for cruelty to animals. He is eligible to be released on bail for 2,000 reais, or 363 US\$, until his trial. He remains in custody until bail is paid.

G1, August 28, 2020.26

End of August 2020 Rio Claro, State of São Paulo, Brazil

The viscera and skeletons of macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II), capybaras (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and other wild animals have been dumped for several weeks along the river Corumbata near the little road that goes from Rio Claro to Batovi. The black vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) circling over the remains alerted the environmental police. G1, August 28, 2020.²⁷

September 22, 2020 Martinópolis, State of São Paulo, Brazil Seizure from a bird breeder of 4 common marmo-

sets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II). G1, September 22, 2020.²⁸

COLOMBIA

August 3, 2020 Department of Antioquia, Colombia To get around the lockdown imposed by



the Covid-19 pandemic, people have been buying exotic little presents via the Internet. This time it was a red howler (*Alouatta seniculus*, Appendix II) delivered in a shoe box. Fortunately for the monkey, the alleged purchasers were police officers acting on a tip. He was taken to the Medellin zoo which has a rehabilitation program for howlers. He will definitely need rehabilitation to be released because at 4 months old, he is already showing signs of dependency on human beings.

To avoid an immediate court appearance, the trafficker claimed to have been in close contact with a Covid-19 case. He is free until he gets his test results. Semana Sostenible, August 3, 2020.²⁹

September 15, 2020

El Águila, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Two spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), a male and a female, were voluntarily handed over. Their "owners" had gotten them from some traffickers over 30 years ago. They have completely lost their wild instincts. They will be entrusted to the San Emigdio CVC refuge.

CVC Ambiental, September 17, 2020; Semana Sostenible, September 22, 2020.³⁰

COSTA RICA

End of September 2020 Paso Canoas, Puntarenas Province, Costa Rica



FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

September 16, 2020 Kourou, Department of French Guiana, France



The gendarmes were called in during the night for a family conflict, and left

with a primate in a cage, a weeper capuchin (*Cebus olivaceus*, Appendix II) or a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, Appendix II). The owner says that he bought him in Suriname 3 years ago. He was handed over to a wildlife veterinary center. As for the owner, he is required to pay a fine of 596 US\$. France Guyane, September 18, 2020.³²

PERU

July 9, 2020 Peru

An emperor tamarin (*Saguinus imperator*, Appendix II) was seized in an alleged wildlife refuge that was in trouble. He was for sale on Internet. Serfor, July 9, 2020.³³

Early September 2020 Moyobamba, Province of Moyobamba, Department of San Martín, Peru

A red-backed squirrel monkey (Saimiri oerstedii, Appendix I) has been rescued.

Neotropical Primate Conservation, September 1st, 2020.³⁴

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA ORANGUTANS

August 7, 2020 Kendal and Semarang Regencies, Central Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia



Samson and Boboy, 2 male orangutans around 20 years old, were rescued. Samson was living in an amusement park for tourists. Boboy was being held by a family. They had been reported to the BKSDA in October 2019. They were sent by ferry to the rehabilitation center of the NGO International Animal Rescue in Ketapang, in the province of West Kalimantan on the island of Borneo where they will probably spend the rest of their lives, IAR says. International Animal Rescue, August 17, 2020;

Channel News Asia, August 18, 2020; The Jakarta Post, August 10, 2020.³⁵

August 7 and 8, 2020

Sei Musam, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

- Seizure of a one-year-old female orangutan on an illegal market. The poachers caught him in the Mont Leuser national park. They managed to escape from the rangers by abandoning their victim in a cardboard box at the foot of an oil palm tree. She will receive care from the Batu Mbelin Orangutan Rehabilitation Center in Sibolangit, before perhaps being released into the wild.

A young orangutan can be sold for between 30 and 50 million rupiahs (or between 2,000 and 3,425 US\$) on the local market. According to the park authorities, orangutan poaching has increased. "There are many young orangutans who have been hunted and sold overseas."

- A one-year-old male orangutan was found in a cardboard box. There was no one anywhere near. He seems to be in good health. He will be cared for through the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program instigated by the Ministry of the Environment and Forests and the NGO Yayasan Ekosistem Lestari. He will be treated before perhaps being released into the wild.

The Jakarta Post, August 12, 2020; OIC, August 12, 2020.³⁶

August 18, 2020

Ketapang, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

A 30- or 40-year-old male orangutan has been saved. He was living on an oil palm plantation with 4 peers. After having anesthetized him, the team from the NGO Animal Rescue evacuated him by canoe. He was released into the forest.

Channel News Asia, August 20, 2020; The Jakarta Post, August 20, 2020.³⁷

August 26, 2020

Tanjung, Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

A 5-month-old orangutan who was being held by a villager has been rescued. Neighbors had informed the police.

Borneo 24, August 26, 2020; iNewsKalbar, August 26, 2020.³⁸

August 29, 2020

Ensayang, Karang Betong, Sekadau Regency, and Ampon, Krio Hulu, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

A female was being held in captivity in a wooden cage. The logger who had taken her from the forest claimed that she had hurt her leg. At his house, she ate rice and cashew nuts, and drank sugar-water and milk. Following recommendations from



a neighbor, she was entrusted to the IAR. She has clearly been through hard times, and suffers from a skin disease. She was sent to the orangutan rehabilitation center in Sungai Awan.

The BKSDA pointed out that keeping wild animals in captivity is just as dangerous for them as it is for humans. "In times of pandemics such as the one we are currently experiencing, the surrender of protected wildlife can reduce the risk of infectious diseases."

Another orangutan in captivity in Krio Hulu was also saved, see "On the Trail" n°26 p. 55.

International Animal Rescue, September 18, 2020; Antara News, September 2, 2020.³⁹

September 9, 2020

Seunebok Keranji, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A male orangutan, approximately 25 years old, was evacuated from an oil palm plantation. In addition to a wound infested with larva in his right hand, he had been hit with 8 pellets from an air gun on his face and



body. He was treated in a refuge belonging to the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program. OIC, September 10, 2020.⁴⁰

September 15, 2020

Gampong Baru, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

A male orangutan was evacuated from an oil palm plantation. He is expected to find new freedom in the Leuser forest.

OIC, September 17, 2020.41

September 23, 2020

Kota Banda Aceh, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Sergent Maryanto was sentenced to 3 months in prison by a military tribunal

for having trafficked a young orangutan. His accomplice, Yoga Darmuka, had been sentenced on April 28, 2020 to one year in prison and a fine of 50 million rupiahs, or 3,050 US\$. Maryanto allegedly only transported the orangutan to Pasir Putih on his motorcycle, for Darmuka, with no knowledge of the recipient or the price of the transaction. Scorpion, September 26, 2020.⁴²

Around September 26, 2020

Humbang Raya, Kapuas Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Local residents informed the BKSDA about the presence of a male orangutan in a pineapple and oil palm plantation. He was 15 years old and weighed 80 kg. When the agents arrived, he fled into a neighboring rubber plantation. After looking for him for 2 hours, they finally managed to anesthetize him. He will be relocated far from human habitation, after a complete medical checkup. Okezone News, September 26, 2020.⁴³

September 30, 2020

Tempurukan, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia



Free !

A 19-year-old male orangutan weighing 50 kg was evacuated. He had taken refuge on a plantation. He is apparently from the neighboring forest of Sentap Kacang, which was partially destroyed by fire in 2019. He was in good health and was released in another part of the forest, near the Benibis River. It was the 14th orangutan rescue carried out by the BKSDA in the province this year.

Times Indonesia, October 3, 2020; Liputan6, October 6, 2020.⁴⁴

Orangutans in India, cf. page 97.

July 9, 2020

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

Three rangers and 2 employees of the NGO Scorpion seized 3 southern pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II) during a patrol. They were in cages and thirsty. Scorpion, July 11, 2020.⁴⁵

August 8, 2020

Mount Sawal, Ciamis Regency, West Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

Ten slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 4 males and 6 females, have been place under observation in semi-liberty in a forest plot. If all goes well, they will be released into the wild.

Most of the lorises were handed over to the authorities voluntarily by local inhabitants, since 2018. All of them were retrained to live in the wild in Bogor. The process, which is long normally, was even slower because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Slow lorises released at Mont Sawal, see "On the Trail" n°14 p.42, n°18 p.44 and n°20 p.60.

International Animal Rescue, August 26, 2020.⁴⁶

August 8 and 9, 2020 Gunung Butak, Malang Regency, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia



A joint team from BKSDA and Pro Fauna Indonesia discovered the carcass of

an ebony leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II) during a patrol. The area is infested with traps. The next day, the agents who came to evacuate the remains found only 2 legs. Ebony leaf monkey meat is believed to be good for respiratory difficulties.

Kumparan, August 12, 2020; Okenews, August 11, 2020.47

THAILAND

Early July 2020 Thailand

At least 8 coconut plantations apparently still use pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II). The young macaques are captured in the forests by poachers. They are then trained to pick coconuts and do circus acts. Coconut producers buy them for between 30,000 and 100,000 bahts (between 1,000 and 3,340 US\$). A pig-tailed macaque who works as a slave can pick up to 1,000 coconuts a day, compared to 80 for a man. Those plantations supply brands that sell internationally, like Aroy-D and Chaokoh. Following the PETA investigation, several distributers (Waitrose, Ocado, Co-op, Boots, Morrisons) and 15,000 stores made the commitment not to sell products made with coconuts from plantations that exploit macaques.

Macaques exploited on coconut plantations, see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 48.

PETA, June 3, 2020; Daily Mail, July 8, 2020; The New Straits Times, July 5, 2020.⁴⁸

August 9, 2020

Rattaphum District, Songkhla Province, Thailand

Two pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II) rescued. Their "owners" contacted the Wildlife Friends Foundation after having seen their rescue center on television. The macaques were apparently given to them by the previous residents who worked a coconut plantation. Their canines had be pulled out. They arrived in their new habitat after an 11-hour journey.

Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, August 15, 2020.49

VIET NAM

July 2, 2020

Quang Binh Province, Viet Nam

Seizure in a private residence of a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) following a call to the Education for Nature – Vietnam hotline. He was entrusted to the rescue center at the Phong Nha Ke Bang national park. ENV, July 6, 2020.⁵⁰

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Mid-July 2020 Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Seizure of a macaque (*Macaca* spp.) in the bathroom of a pagoda following a telephone tip. About one hundred temples and pagodas are keeping wild animals.

ENV, July 22, 2020.51

July 30, 2020 Viet Nam

Sentenced to a one-year suspended prison term and 2 years on probation for having illegally detained a gibbon



(*Nomascus gabriellae*, Appendix I). He was confiscated in December 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°27 p. 68).

ENV, August 6, 2020.52

End of August 2020 Ba Dinh District, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Seizure of a pygmy loris (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Appendix I) following a tip. He was being kept in a cage in a restaurant. He was entrusted to the Hanoi Wildlife Rescue Center. ENV, August 26, 2020.⁵³

Early September 2020 Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam

A pygmy loris (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Appendix I) captured in the forest is for sale in the market. Out of compassion, a man bought him and then contacted ENV. The seller disappeared and the loris was given to a shelter. ENV, September 5, 2020.⁵⁴



SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 7-August 25, 2020 Agripada, Bandra and Madanpura, Mumbai District, State of Maharashtra, India

Looking for a very young orangutan, carried from house to house. His photos appear surreptitiously on social networks. The NGO PETA offers a reward of 100,000 rupees (1,335 US\$) to anyone who can locate the small migrant smuggled in from Indonesia or Malaysia. Two suspects are apprehended at home. No physical traces of the orangutan are found, but their mobile phones contain photos and videos proving that they took part in his display. Two caged parakeets were seized. Other searches have been carried out in the megacity of over 20 million people. But the orangutan remains missing. Orangutans in India, see "On the Trail" n°9 p.42.

The Times of India, August 27, 2020 ; Hindustan Times, September 15, 2020.55

August 19 and 20, 2020 Chandigarh, Chandigarh District, Union Territory of Chandigarh, India



PETA has pressed charges against Kamaljit Singh, a tattoo artist at the Kamz Inkzone salon. He posted several videos on Instagram with a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II). Singh and his director, Deepak Vohra, were arrested. After his arraignment, he was freed on probation. The macaque is nowhere to be found. Singh says he has released him.

The Times of India, August 20 and 21, 2020.⁵⁶

September 7, 2020

Nadpalu, Udupi DIstrict, State of Karnataka, India

Fourteen monkey carcasses of different ages were found on the side of the road in a bag. They were probably killed by farmers whose fields would have been damaged.

The New Indian Express, September 8, 2020.57



ISRAEL

July 21, 2020 Kiryat-Motzkin, Haifa District, Israel

Three arrests. The suspects, all around 20 years old, are accused of having stolen a golden-headed lion tamarin (*Leon-topithecus chrysomelas*, Appendix I) from a zoo. They wanted



to sell him. The primate was recovered and put back in his cage.

Times of Israel, July 22, 2020.58

Mid-September 2020 Istanbul, Istanbul Province, Marmara Region, Turkey

The home of Meriç Izgi, a Youtuber who likes to post pictures of himself with macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II), was searched. It is the 3rd time that he had obtained a young monkey for his



YouTube

videos and that the monkey is seized. The macaque is estimated to be worth 10,000 Turkish pounds (1,300 US\$). The prosecutor general of Istanbul is willing to charge him for primate smuggling, along with his alleged accomplice, Elif T.

Haber Global, September 16, 2020; Hürriyet, December 25, 2020.⁵⁹

NORTHERN EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

Mid-July 2020 United Kingdom

Animal testing is doing well in the United Kingdom. One thousand imports of monkeys or monkey parts during 2017, 2,666 in 2018, 6,790 in 2019. The end of 2019 was marked by a strong demand from virology laboratories alerted by the emergence of Covid-19 and the statistics for 2020 will be even more "high-performance" because of research on drugs and vaccines that could reverse the pandemic. China has long been the main supplier of monkeys to British and European laboratories. It suspended exports at the beginning of 2020, a marketing strategy aimed at reserving the stock for national experimenters and slowing down researches of international experimenters (see "On the Trail Covid-19 Special Edition" p.5). Today, Mauritius and Viet Nam are among the main exporters of the species most used in laboratories, namely long-tailed macaques (Macaca fascicularis, Appendix II).

Looking back to 2019, import permits were for live monkeys and samples of saliva, blood and other soft tissues. Other species introduced on the United Kingdom soil are used to supply zoos or the pet market. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) mentions 25 squirrel monkeys (Saimiri spp., Appendix I or II) and 7 golden-rumped lion tamarins (Leontopithecus chrysopygus, Appendix I) for 2019. Sarah Kite, from the NGO Action for Primates, points out that, apart from the cruelty of trafficking, there are also risks to human health. For this reason, the United States banned the import of primates for pet use in 1975. The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention states that «non-human primates can carry infectious diseases that are dangerous and sometimes fatal to humans." The Independent, July 14, 2020.60

On the Trail n°30. Robin des Bois



BELGIUM

August 25, 2020 Belgium

Seizure in a private home of a Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*, Appendix I). His owner did not have a CITES certificate and had not registered the animal. The macaque was poached in Morocco, then smuggled across borders and sold on the black market. He was handed over to the Dutch foundation AAP (Animal Advocacy and Protection), who, along with IFAW, are managing the project "Born to be Wild," dedicated to protecting Barbary macaques in the Ifrane national park in Morocco. There are an estimated 5,000 to 9,000 individuals, including 200 in Gibraltar.

Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, August 26, 2020; "Atlas of the Business of Endangered Species ", Robin des Bois, published by Arthaud, 2019.⁶¹

FRANCE

July 24, 2020 South of France

Illegal detention in an private home of a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, Appendix II), around 20 years old, who was then sent to the Tanière zoo-refuge. He had bitten his owners. After a 3-month quarantine, he will be able to live with one peer. In the wild, tufted capuchins live in groups made up of an average of 18 individuals. La Tanière, July 24, 2020.⁶²

NETHERLANDS

September 23, 2020 The Netherlands



Seizure in a private home of a common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) after several alerts came in regarding his sale. Private individuals are not authorized to have primates.

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA), September 23, 2020. 63

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

Early August 2020 Nerpio, Province of Albacete, Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain



Seizure, after an investigation that lasted for a month and a half, of 12 ring-tailed lemurs (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I), 3 adult females and 2 adult males as well as 7 young individuals born in 2019. The owner did not have the necessary authorizations, or the proper housing conditions for the animals. They were entrusted to the Primadomus Sanctuary, belonging to the Dutch foundation Animal Advocacy and Protection; based in Villena, in the province of Alicante.

El Digital Castilla, August 4, 2020.64



Armadillos, Pacas, Capybaras and Anteaters



Southern tamandua (Tamandua tetradactyla), Aquidauana, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. Photo Hector Bottai



BRASIL

July 12, 2020

São Gabriel, State of Río Grande do Sul, Brazil

During the Covid-19 lockdown, the plunder of food ranges from domestic to wild. At around 3am, the traffic police intercepted a small car. The 3 passengers had piled a capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), 8 sheep, 2 rifles, knives and a flashlight in the back seat. O Diário, July 12, 2020.¹

July 17, 2020

Promissão, State of São Paulo, Brazil

The Policia seized a capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), a 20-calibre rifle, 25 rounds of ammunition from a vehicle,



proceeded with the arrest of the 2 passengers, the search of their homes, the seizure of 2 additional firearms with their ammunition and the collection of 2 fines of 500 reais or 92 US\$.

G1, July 17, 2020.²

July 20, 2020 São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil



Seizure in a freezer of 33 three-banded armadillos (genus *Tolypeutes*). One arrest. The man was trading in their meat. Rápido no Ar, July 21, 2020.³

Rapido no Ar, July 21, 2020.

July 23, 2020 Itariri, State of São Paulo, Brazil

A collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*) protected by Appendix II, a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 2 armadillos (family Dasypodidae) were in the freezer. When the military police turned up at the house by surprise, there was a rifle on the kitchen table.

Registro Portal da Cidade, July 28, 2020.⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS August 19, 2020 Vazante, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Seizure at the home of 2 brothers, aged 64 and 68, of 3 butchered pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), a firearm and all the poaching paraphernalia.

Rádio Itatiaia, August 20, 2020.5

August 30, 2020

Petrolina, State of Pernambuco, Brazil



The driver stated that he "found" the armadillo (family Dasypodidae) on the side of the BR-428 road. Injured, he was in a bag in the back of the car. "I intended to eat it." G1, August 31, 2020.⁶

September 7, 2020

Guaratinguetá, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Early in the morning, along the Paraíba River, environmental police come to free a capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and go away with 2 poachers in possession of a shotgun, a 22-calibre rifle and ammunition.

Olhar Animal, September 11, 2020.7

September 7, 2020 Costa Rica, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil



Roadside check at the crossing of MS 306 and MS 316. The man on the motorbike,

a 54-year-old bricklayer, claims that the 24 kg of meat in his trunk are pork. He eventually admitted that they were 3 collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II). He killed them near the Nascentes do Rio Taquari State park in Alcinopolis, 85 km away. He leads the police to a farm where he has hidden his 22-calibre rifle. The meat, the weapon and the motorbike are seized. The man is fined 2,400 reais, or 435 US\$.

Olhar Animal, September 9, 2020.8

September 13, 2020

Mandaguari, State of Paraná, Brazil

The patrol of the environmental police spot a suspicious vehicle parked on the Estrada Promessa. A fire shot rings out. Arrest of a man in possession of a dead paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III), a 22-calibre rifle and 12 cartridges. Olhar Animal, September 16, 2020.⁹

September 13, 2020 Macatuba, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Following a report, the environmental police intercept a Volkswagen on the Oni Mateus highway, along the bank of the



Tietê River. Inside the car there was a whole range of hunting gear: a 22-calibre rifle with a silencer and a telescopic sight, ammunition, 3 knives and camouflage clothing. The suspect admits that he possesses other weapons and that he keeps bushmeat in his freezer. Seizure of 3 more guns, 175 cartridges, armadillo meat (family Dasypodidae) and 20 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) at his home. The man is fined 11,000 reais (1,997 US\$).

Olhar Animal, September 14, 2020.¹⁰



September 21, 2020 João Costa, State of Piauí, Brazil

Betrayed by the barking of their dogs and by their flashlights, 4 hunters are discreetly followed by an environmental police patrol in the Serra da Capivara national park. They run across the road, but one of them retraces his steps. He is arrested by the police laying in wait. The 3 others manage to escape. Seizure of 8 armadillos (family Dasypodidae) and a tamandua (collared anteater *Tamandua tetradactyla*), all dead. Pensar Piauí, September 21, 2020.¹¹

September 30, 2020 Macapá, State of Amapá, Brazil

A ship is under arrest. Seizure on board of more than 100 kg of animal meat, among others pacas (genus *Cuniculus*) and armadillos (family Dasypodidae). After a health control, the meat was handed over to the city's zoological park to feed the animals. G1, October 1st, 2020.¹²



SPAIN

Early August 2020

Águilas, Autonomous Community of Murcia, Spain

Seizure in a restaurant of a charango, the stringed musical instrument whose body is an armadillo shell (*Chaetophractus vellerosus*). It was used as a decoration.

20 Minutos, August 7, 2020.13

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

September 2020 United States of America

In 5 years (from 2010 to 2014) the United States of America imported 1,156 living bats and 95,319 bat parts in the form of skeletons, skulls, corpses. This puzzle corresponds to about 26,000 bats. 60% of imports are motivated by scientific and biomedical research. 40% of the remains fall into the categories of trophies, decorative and so-called learning objects. The study by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) shows that the American people are particularly fond of paperweights that encase bats in a plastic resin cube. Amazon, eBay and other sites dedicated to punk and gothic culture share the commercial market for the flying mammal. When identified, the imported species are, in decreasing order, Japanese pipistrelles (Pipistrellus abramus), vampire bats (Desmodus rotundus), African straw-coloured fruit bats (Eidolon helvum) and Seba's short-tailed bats (Carollia perspicillata). The CBD recommends that mankind coexist and even cooperate with the order of bats. Bats are major players in pollinisation. The CBD points out that they pollinate the agaves that are used among others to make tequila.

Center for Biological Diversity, Dealing in disease : How U.S Wildlife Imports Fuel Global Pandemic Risks, September 2020.¹



29.99 US\$ on Amazon on 13/07/2021.

OTHER MAMMALS INCLUDING HEDGEHOGS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

August 2020 South Africa

Seizure of 2 meerkats (*Suricata suricatta*) by the SPCA and handing over to the care of the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital. A day later, the female gave birth to 4 pups. They too escaped the pet market. The 6 may regain the wild in a suitable and protected habitat. Warning to those interested: young meerkats are touching and capricious. But after a few months, they bite and scratch. Johannesburg Wildlife Vet, August 27, 2020.¹





INDIA

July 13, 2020

Nalgonda District, State of Telangana, India

Four on a motorbike on their way to work in a stone quarry, the young workers flushed out a small Indian civet (*Viverricula indica*, Appendix III in India) while driving through the Munugode forest. They ate it. The video of their feat was posted on social networks. With the licence plate of the motorbike reported, the investigation was all done for the Forest Department. Two people were arrested. The motorbike was seized.

The Times of India, July 19, 2020; The New Indian Express, July 21, 2020.²

VIET NAM

End of July 2020

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam Seizure of an Owston's palm civet (*Chrotogale owstoni*) in a cage in a sports hall. ENV, July 21, 2020.³

End of September 2020 Tay Ho District, Hanoi, Viet Nam

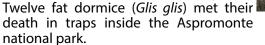


Seizure of 2 3-month-old small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I). The suspect had received them as gifts when they were just born and was trying to sell them. They are now in the care of Save Vietnam's Wildlife. SVW, September 28, 2020.⁴

EUROPE

ITALY

Early September 2020 Ciminà and Gerace, Province of Reggio Calabria, Region of Calabria, Italy



- R.C., a 72-year-old breeder, is arrested when he checks one of his traps hidden in an oak tree. It contains the lifeless body of a dormouse. Seven other traps are found, and as many dormice.

- M.A., aged 49, already known to the police, is caught setting traps. At his home, the carabinieri seize 4 dormouse bodies.

Zoom 24, September 8, 2020.⁵



UNITED KINGDOM

August 1st, 2020

Quedgeley, Gloucester County, England, United Kingdom

Two days after being added to the red list of species at risk of extinction, a hedgehog in Gloucestershire County, England, fell victim to arson. The pyromaniac is actively sought. The Mammal Society believes that hedgehogs in the United Kingdom are as threatened as vultures.

Gloucestershire Live, August 1st, 2021.⁶

BIRDS



Scopoli's shearwater, Calonectris diomedea. Photo Neil DeMaster

"On the Trail" n°30 Value on the black market according to media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Species (live bird, unless otherwise stated)	US\$	Country	Ref. (year)
Grey parrot	219 - 674	Algeria	1 (2018)
Macaw	1,425	Argentina	8 (2020)
Parrot	214	Argentina	8 (2020)
Flamingo	260	Colombia	19 (2020)
Bird nest	14.3	China	29 (2019)
White-rumped shama	47 - 59	Malaysia	47 (2020)
	25	Thailand	53 (2020)
Oriental magpie-robin	2 - 12	Malaysia	47 (2020)
Hill myna	20 - 26.5	India	58 (2020)
Keel-billed toucan	9,480	India	60 (2020)
Red-tailed black cockatoo	10,156	France/Switzerland	79 (2020)
Cockatoo	34	Indonesia (Maluku Islands)	51* (2020)
	340	Indonesia (Java)	
Skewer of 12 robins, ortolans or skylarks	30	France	85 (2019)
European goldfinche / common linnet / Europe- an greenfinche	56-113	Spain	93 (2020)
Stuffed black kite	177	Spain	102 (2020)

* Chapter Multi-species

NORTHERN AFRICA

ALGERIA

September 1st, 2020 Algeria

Publication of a study on the trade in grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) and Timneh parrots (*Psittacus erithacus timneh*, Appendix I).

- On the classified ad website ouedkniss.com, investigators found between July 2017 and August 2018 and between January and March 2019 a total of 561 parrots offered for sale in 269 ads.

- Parrot sellers were also found in 3 of the 13 weekly markets visited by researchers in northern Algeria between August 14 and September 27, 2018: 28 parrots were spotted in Algiers, one in Constantine and one in Oran. Out of 81 pet shops visited, 28 offered grey parrots (44 in total) in 15 cities. Prices ranged from 219 US\$ (for juveniles) to 674 US\$.

- In 84% of the cases, the sellers said they had caught the parrots in the wild. Most sell other birds, including European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), canaries (*Serinus canaria domestica*) and Senegal parrots (*Poicephalus senegalus*, Appendix II). Customers are attracted by their sociability and their ability to speak.

"The trade in the endangered African Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* and the Timneh Parrot *Psittacus timneh* in Algeria", Ostrich-Journal of African Ornithology, September 1st, 2020.¹

MOROCCO

August 12, 2020

Fquih Ben Salah, Béni Mellal-Khénifra Region, Morocco

The police inspect a van supposedly transporting fruit and vegetables. But instead of crates, they find 720 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) shut in their cages. They have been released. Bladi, August 16, 2020.²

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

Mid-September 2020

Djoum, South Region, Cameroon

Arrest of a suspect and seizure of 8 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I). They were intended to be sold in Yaoundé. They were entrusted to the eco-guards of the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife. Grey parrots are threatened by the exotic pet trade as well as by local ritual practices. Their red feathers are used in religious ceremonies. Since they can speak, their heads used as amulets are believed to have the power to cure speech difficulties. BBC Wildlife, September 23, 2020.³

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 26, 2020 Malvern, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa



A reward of 22,000 rand (1,311 US\$) has been promised by the Centre for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW) to anyone who allows the identification of the person who shot a crowned eagle (*Stephanoaetus coronatus*, Appendix II) on sight. Permanently paralysed by a bullet that went through the spinal cord, the female raptor that collapsed on a roof in the suburbs of Durban was finished off by the vets. In the green outskirts of the city, conflict is insidious between crowned eagles and pet owners. Although the raptors' diet consists of small rodents, vervet monkeys and birds, some pet abductions have been reported. CROW recalls that pet straying is prohibited.

CROW, July 30 and August 6, 2020; Dispatch Live, August 5, 2020.⁴

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

July 11, 2020

Fort Brown border station, Brownsville, State of Texas, United States of America. Border with Mexico.

Seizure of a live toucan (family Ramphastidae) in a plastic bag. Arrest of 7 Mexican and Guatemalan illegal immigrants. The bird was handed over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Monitor, July 13, 2020.⁵

July 30, 2020

State of Louisiana, United States of America



Sentencing of Kaenon A. Constantin, aged 28, to 5 years' probation, 360

hours of community service related to wildlife conservation, a fine of 1,000 US\$ and 75,000 US\$ in damages to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). He will not be allowed to hunt until the 360 hours are completed. On May 20, 2016, he had killed two whooping cranes (*Grus americana*, Appendix I). Constantin initially denied the facts, but admitted them in April 2018, 2 years after the investigation began.

US Department of Justice, July 31, 2020.6

August 18, 2020

Dallas, State of Texas, United States of America

Cynthia Macias-Martinez, 48 years-old, pleads guilty. She sold dozens of dried hummingbirds (family Trochilidae, Appendix I or II) in her spiritual shop. She brought them from Mexico. The dried "chuparosas" are said to have supernatural virtues and are used as amulets.

US Department of Justice, August 21, 2020.7

LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

July 9, 2020

La Esmeralda Farm, Province of Santa Fe, Argentina

Theft of 2 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) and 4 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II). The economic value of a macaw is estimated at 100,000 pesos or 1,425 US\$, the one of a "talking" parrot at 15,000 pesos or 214 US\$. The thieves took advantage of the Covid-19 lockdown. None of the nearby surveillance cameras were working.

El Litoral, July 11, 2020.8

July 18, 2020

Cañada de Gómez and Armstrong, Province of Santa Fe, Argentina



Two search warrants. Seizure of cages and about 100 wild birds, including ultramarine grosbeaks (Cyanocompsa brissonii), rufous-browed peppershrikes (Cyclarhis gujanensis), creamy-bellied thrushes (Turdus amaurochalinus), yellow cardinals (Gubernatrix cristata), red-crested cardinals (Paroaria coronata), rufous-bellied thrushes (Turdus rufiventris), hooded siskins (Spinus magellanicus), shiny cowbirds (Molothrus bonariensis), doublecollared seedeaters (Sporophila caerulescens), lovebirds (Agapornis spp., Appendix II except Agapornis roseicollis). Two suspects were arrested and later released pending trial. El Ciudadano, July 18, 2020.9

August 2020

San Luis, Villa Mercedes and Justo Daract, Province of San Luis, Argentina

The CCVS (Centro de Conservación de Vida Silvestre) in La Florida welcomed 101 new birds of 20 species during the month. Six searches allowed the seizure of yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), golden-winged caciques (*Cacicus chrysopterus*), pampa finches (*Embernagra platensis*), golden-billed saltators (*Saltator aurantiirostris*) and red pileated finches (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*). One blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) was handed over to the CCVS officers. An injured black-chested eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II) was reported and rescued.

Agencia de Noticias San Luis, August 26, 2020.¹⁰

August 4, 2020 Gualeguaychú, Province of Entre Ríos, Argentina

Seizure of a red-andgreen macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) and a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) in a shop in the city centre. El Día, August 4, 2020.¹¹



Early September 2020

Oliva, Department of Tercero Arriba, and Santa Rosa de Calamuchita, Department of Calamuchita, Province of Cordoba, Argentina



Seizure of 25 wild birds in Oliva, 17 cages, 12 trap cages and one aviary.

Seizure of 35 wild birds in Santa Rosa de Calamuchita including 3 yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II).

All of them were entrusted to the Tatú Carreta zoological park in Casa Grande.

Diario sumario, September 10, 2020.¹²

BOLIVIA

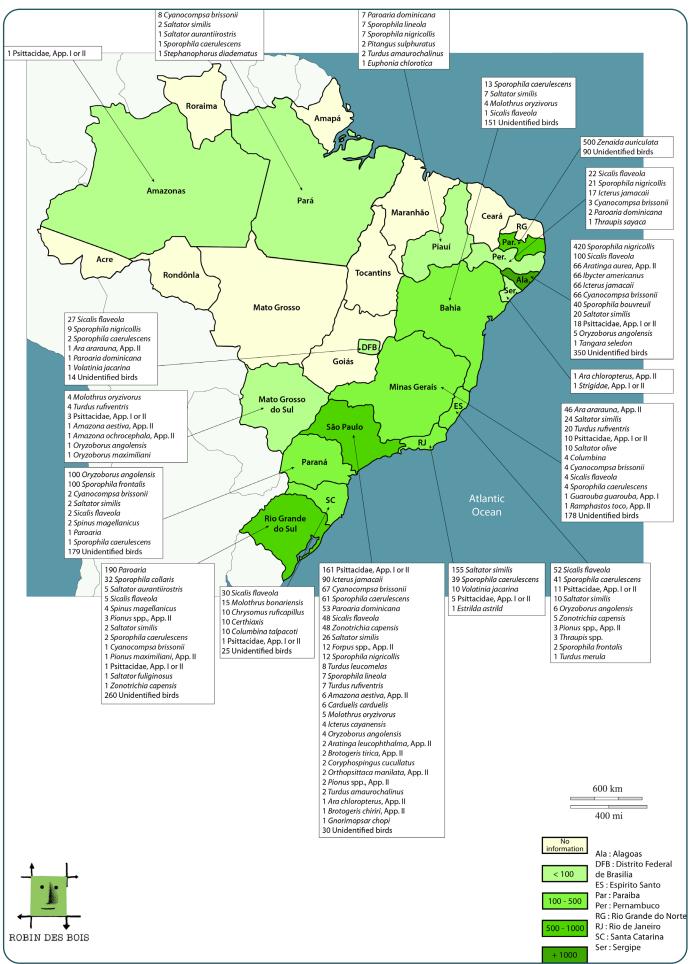
August 20, 2020

Sucre, Province of Oropeza, Department of Chuquisaca, Bolivia

Interception by the Pofoma (Policía Forestal y de Medio Ambiente) of a vehicle transporting 76 birds, including 9 northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), 19 puppies, 2 common sliders (*Trachemys scripta*) and 39 hamsters, in short, a full assortment for a clandestine pet shop. The driver was arrested. He was coming from Cochabamba in the north and heading for Potosí in the south.

Bolivia.com, August 20, 2020.13

4,428 birds seized in Brazil between 1 July and 30 September 2020 according to official and media sources





















(PRF)















On the Trail n°30. Robin des Bois

July 7, 2020

Carmo do Rio Claro, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil



The man claims to be a duly registered hobbyist breeder. His registration in the

register is said to have expired in July 2017. In August 2017, authorities found 6 giant cowbirds (*Molothrus oryzivorus*), 7 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and 3 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulescens*) at his home without an identification ring, and 2 plumbeous seedeaters (*Sporophila plumbea*), a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), an ultramarine grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*) and 3 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) with falsified rings. He allegedly purchased the birds with falsified rings in good faith.

He was initially sentenced to 2 years in prison. The sentence was commuted to a fine equivalent to one minimum monthly wage (1,039 reals, or 258 US\$) accompanied by community service by the court of appeals.

Portal Ondasul, July 7, 2020.14

Mid-August-mid-September 2020 State of São Paulo, Brazil

122 live magellanic penguins (Spheniscus magellanicus) were taken in on the beaches by the Gremar Institute's network. Andrea Maranho, veterinarian for the institute, says that at the end of their migration between Argentina, Chile, the Falkland Islands and the coastline of the State of Sao Paulo, the penguins faced multiple difficulties such as food shortage, marine currents reverses, catches or injuries due to fishing gear. 280 dead penguins were collected. In the digestive tract of at least 17 specimens, fragments of polystyrene, rubber, hooks or fishing line debris were found. Live magellanic penguins are sometimes adopted by walkers and other beach goers and used in precarious conditions and with a very short life expectancy as pets, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 30, n°17 p. 18, n°25 p. 38.

G1, August 19 and September 20, 2020.15



Magellanic penguin, Spheniscus magellanicus Illustration photo

OPERATION AJURUETE

August 27, 2020 Itambé, Cândido Sales, Encruzilhada, Poções and Maracás, State of Bahia, Belo Horizonte, Contagem, Ribeirão



das Neves, Divisópolis, Chapada Gaúcha, Riachinho, São Romão, Santa Fé de Minas and Brasilândia de Minas, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Searches and seizures to dismantle a gang of wild bird traffickers. It is specialised in the sale of young parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) and toucans (family Ramphastidae). The birds were captured in the Boa Nova (State of Bahia) and Grande Sertao Veredas (State of Minas Gerais) national parks.

The investigation started in 2018, after the arrest of a bird trafficker in Caruaru (see "On the Trail" n°20 p.38 and n°22 p.38). One high-member of the network was arrested. The federal police present him as a multi-recidivist and one of the most influential traffickers in the country. He has to pay a fine of 1.6 million reais or 276,690 US\$. Estado de Minas, August 27, 2020.¹⁶

4,428 birds seized in Brazil between 1 July and 30 September 2020. Map on page 106.

COLOMBIA

Early July 2020

Bogota, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia

Rescue of 4 illegally held wild animals thanks to reports. Three yellow-fronted amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), two of which had been kept for 35 years, and a red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*) were handed over to the Centro de Atención y Valoración de Fauna Silvestre. Since the beginning of the year, 320 birds have been seized in Bogotá thanks to the alert numbers.



Bogota, July 3, 2020.¹⁷

Early july 2020 Sincelejo, Department of Sucre, Colombia

Seizure and handing over of 17 blue-black grassquits (Volatinia jacarina), one saffron finch (Sicalis flaveola), 2 black-striped sparrows (Arremonops conirostris), 3 ruddy-breasted seedeaters (Sporophila minuta), 2 chestnut-capped blackbirds (Chrysomus ruficapillus), a blue-gray tanager (Thraupis episcopus) and a large-billed seed finch (Oryzoborus crassirostris).

El Universal, July 3, 2020.18

Mid-September 2020 Fusagasugá, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia

Seizure of 3 American flamingos (Phoenicopterus ruber, Appendix II), 2 females and a male. Their owners were feeding them with food leftovers. They are now being rehabilitated in Tocaima wildlife the centre before being possibly released into the wild in the department of La Guajira. Flamingos are very popular in Co-



lombia and can be sold for up to one million pesos (260 US\$).

Semana Sostenible, September 18, 2020.19

MEXICO

July 6, 2020

Pueblo Nuevo, State of Durango, Mexico

Posts on social networks show a man capturing a military macaw (Ara militaris, Appendix I). Profepa agents go to his home. Seizure of the macaw, with a bullet injury to the left wing. It was handed over to a zoo.

Profepa, July 17, 2020.20

July 12, 2020

Mérida, State of Yucatán, Mexico

Seizure of 17 white-collared seedeaters (Sporophila torqueola) in 6 cages during a roadside check. The owner had no document attesting to their legal origin. Ten of them died before being handed over to Profepa. The survivors were entrusted to the wildlife conservation management unit (UMA) in Merida.

Profepa, July 27, 2020.21

July 20, 2020

Pabellón de Arteaga, State of Aguascalientes, Mexico



Seizure of 43 budgerigars (Melopsittacus undulatus) during a road check. One arrest. They had their wings clipped and 15 of them had their heads dyed, so as to sell them at a higher price. They were entrusted to the UMA Rodolfo Landeros Gallegos. Profepa, July 20, 2020.22

Mid-September 2020 Tehuantepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

Seizure of 383 orange-fronted conures (Aratinga canicularis, Appendix II) in a van on the road between Tonala (Jalisco State) and Arriaga (Chiapas State). The 7 suspects arrested were driving towards Santo Domingo Zanatepec.

Ernesto Mendez, September 10, 2020; Imparcial Oaxaca, September 11, 2020.23

PERU

July 9, 2020 Peru



Seizure in a pet shop of 25 birds including redmasked conures (Aratinga erythrogenys, Appendix II) taken in the wild and illegally offered for sale via the Internet.

Serfor, July 9, 2020.24

Early August 2020

District of Villa El Salvador, Province of Lima, Peru

A man is selling 7 canary-winged parakeets (Brotogeris versicolurus, Appendix II) and 3 redmasked conures (Aratingaerythrogenys, Appendix II) online. The agents of the Natioanal Forest and Wildlife Service (Serfor) present themselves as buyers. The man is arrested while carrying 2 cardboard boxes containing the 10 birds in the street, which were eventually handed over to the Cieneguilla zoo. According to the police, wildlife trafficking is on the rise on social networks during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Wapa, August 10, 2020.25

Early August 2020 San Juan de Lurigancho, Province of Lima, Peru



Seizure of 15 canary-winged parakeets (Brotogeris versicolurus, Appendix II) from a Facebook seller. While waiting to be sold, they were in a cellar together with an Illiger's saddle-back tamarin (Leontocebus illigeri). Wapa, August 10, 2020.26

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

July 21, 2020 Miyun District, Beijing Municipality, China



Release of 22 birds, including a kestrel (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) and a night heron (family Ardeidae) by the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. China Daily, July 21, 2020.²⁷

July 24, 2020

Guangzhou, Foshan, and Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, Wuzhou and Dongxing, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China



Arrest of Liang and dismantling of an illegal breeding farm in a sawmill in Guangzhou. On the spot, the authorities seized 140 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and 5 eggs, a toucan (family Ramphastidae) and 2 Chinese three-striped box turtles (*Cuora trifasciata*, Appendix II). Liang smuggled the animals through Dongxing, on the border with Viet Nam.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2020 ; Guangzhou Quotidien, August 19, 2020.²⁸



FAMILY AFFAIRS

July 26, 2020

Zhanjiang, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Chaozhou, Guangdong Province, Ningde, Fujian Province, Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

New dismantling of a nest trafficking network. In a coordinated operation, 160 customs officers arrest 24 suspects and seize 1.7 tonnes of bird nests, i.e. 170,000 nests based on 10 g per nest.

In November 2019, the police identify a suspicious house in Lianjiang, Guangdong. Seven or 8 people come and go every day with packages.

packages The are full of bird's nests. Liu, the head of the gang, is also the head of the family. He works together with his son, with cousin and а with the coufather-insin's



law. Almost all the suspects are family members or close relations. The gang bought the birds' nests in Malaysia. The smuggled consignments had 3 entry points into China: Shenzhen, Hong Kong Bay and the border with Viet Nam. In 3 years, nearly 100 tonnes of bird's nests were reportedly smuggled i.e. 10 millions bird nests. The total value of the traffic is estimated at one billion yuan or nearly 143 million US\$ i.e. 14,3 US\$ per nest. After entering China, the nests were cleaned, calibrated, packed by illegal labour without prior veterinary inspection, and then sent by express delivery to resellers. In their statement, Chinese Customs stated that they wanted to ensure the food safety for the population, regulate the bird's nest market and fight smuggling. «Especially during the epidemic, bird's nests can carry many health risks and harm human health."

Chinese Customs, July 27 and 31, 2020.29



August 14, 2020 Huangpu, Guangdong Province, China



Arrest and release on bail of a man who acknowledges that he kept a grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) and claims that one day it flew out of the window. Xxcb.cn, September 9, 2020.³⁰



INDONESIA

Sumatra Island, Indonesia

According to the NGO Flight, one million birds have been captured on the island of Sumatra over the past year. In 5 years, 14 million birds have been shipped by sea or air to the island of Java. The annual turnover of this traffic is estimated at between 201 and 336 million US\$.

Oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*) are the most sought-after by the million fans of birdsong contests. Blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*), crested jays (*Platylophus galericulatus*) and blue-topped hanging parrots (*Loriculus galgulus*, Appendix II) are also targeted.

Under pressure from 'kicau mania' (songbird mania), the Ministry of Environment and Forestry removed in 2018 white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), pied mynas (*Gracupica contra*), strawheaded bulbuls (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*, Appendix II), little shrikethrushes (*Colluricincla megarhyncha*) and Sangihe shrikethrushes (*Coracornis sanghirensis*) from the list of protected species.

Flight: Protecting Indonesia's Birds, September 4, 2020.³¹

July 4 and 14, 2020

Pangkalan Kerinci District, Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

- Search of a trafficker's warehouse. Seizure of 1,300 songbirds taken from the wild.

- Seizure of 1,752 birds on the Trans-Sumatran Highway: at 9.10pm, at km 57, in a Toyota; at 10.05pm, at km 55, in a bus. The survivors were released the following day.

Flight: Protecting Indonesia's Birds, July 6 and 22, 2020.³²



On the road to freedom

July 7, 2020

Port of Bakauheni, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia Seizure of 400 birds trapped in 43 crates of fruit in the rear of a car: bar-winged prinias (*Prinia familiaris*), yellow-vented bulbuls (*Pycnonotus goiavier*), Javan white-eyes (*Zosterops flavus*) and purple-throated sunbirds (*Leptocoma sperata*). Tempo, September 7, 2020.³³

July 8, 2020

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



Seizure of an Asian black eagle (*Ictinaetus malayensis*, Appendix II) by a patrol of forest officers and the NGO Scorpion. A villager was holding it captive on the threshold of his house. It was entrusted into the care of the Sibolangit Wildlife Rescue Centre in Deli Serdang regency.

Scorpion, July 11 and 13, 2020.34

July 8, 2020

Port of Pangkal Balam, Pangkal Pinang City, Bangka Belitung Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 5 undocumented blue-topped hanging parrots (*Loriculus galgulus*, Appendix II). They were on their way to Tanjung Priok on the island of Java. They regained their freedom 2 days later. Antara News, July 9 and 10, 2020.³⁵

July 14, 2020

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

Seizure of 84 wild birds, including blue-masked leafbirds (*Chloropsis venusta*), Asian glossy starlings (*Aplonis panayensis*) and typical white-eyes (genus *Zosterops*), following a tip-off. They were distributed in 5 boxes in a bus from Indragiri Hulu (Riau province) to Jakarta on the island of Java. Antara News, July 14, 2020.³⁶

July 15, 2020

Baluran National Park, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia



Release of a crested serpent-eagle (Spilornis cheela, Appendix II), a white-

bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*, Appendix II), a changeable hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II) and 4 green peafowls (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II). The changeable hawk-eagle was seized in 2013 near Yogyakarta.

Centre for Orangutan Protection, July 9, 14, 16 and 17, 2020.³⁷

July 17, 2020

Jambi City, Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 240 cinereous tits (*Parus cinereus*) in the toilets of the interprovicial bus terminal in Alam Barajo. They were crammed in 8 plastic crates. They were destined to the Java Island. They will be released.

Antara News, July 17, 2020.38



Cinereous tit, Parus cinereus

July 24, 2020

Bandar Lampung City, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

1,527 undocumented birds were denied boarding for the island of Java. The 2 people who were transporting them were arrested. The birds came from Aceh and Jambi provinces and Padang city.

According to the NGO Flight, the trafficking of birds from Sumatra to Java has soared since the end of the Covid-19 lockdown.

Antara News, July 24, 2020.39

August 5-6, 2020

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

No less than 2,960 wild birds were seized in 2 days from buses or minibuses before their departure to the island of Java: zebra doves (*Geopelia striata*), sooty-headed bulbuls (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*), yellow-vented bulbuls (*Pycnonotus goiavier*), lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*), blackand-red broadbills (*Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos*) bar-winged prinias (*Prinia familiaris*), Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*), typical white-eyes (genus *Zosterops*), cinereous tits (*Parus cinereus*) and spotted doves (*Spilopelia chinensis*). They tested negative for avian influenza and will be released by the BKSDA.

Antara News, August 7, 2020.40

August 25, 2020

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

Seizure of 212 birds in a bus travelling to Central Java: blue-topped hanging parrots (*Loriculus galgulus*, Appendix II), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), blue-rumped parrots (*Psittinus cyanurus*, Appendix II), blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*), blue-masked leafbirds (*Chloropsis venusta*), lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis venusta*), lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*), black magpies (*Platysmurus leucopterus*), crimson sunbirds (*Aethopyga siparaja*).

1,310 other birds were intercepted: purplethroated sunbirds (*Leptocoma sperata*), bar-winged prinias (*Prinia familiaris*), typical white-eyes (genus *Zosterops*), zebra doves (*Geopelia striata*), cinereous tits (*Parus cinereus*) and oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*).

The 1,522 birds were quarantined and then released.

Antara News, August 25, 2020.41

September 4, 2020

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

Seizure of 130 songbirds, crammed in 10 boxes. They were coming from Jambi province and were destined for Yogyakarta (Java island).

Between January and August 2020, 32,000 birds were seized at the port of Bakauheni. Every week, the authorities make between 3 and 5 seizures. Twenty times as many smugglers are reportedly going undetected, increasingly using rented vehicles. Smuggling takes place at any hour of the day and night and involves a long chain of intermediaries (breeders, poachers, resellers, accessory manufacturers, food producers, singing contest participants and their organisers). The price can triple between the first buyer and the end customer.

Tempo, September 7, 2020.42

September 8, 2020

Parbubu I, North Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



The illegally captured rhinoceros hornbill (Buceros rhinoceros, Appendix II) was handed over by his master to the proper quarter. It should be released. Scorpion, September 10, 2020.43

September 12, 2020

Bukit Mas, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Caught by children in a mangosteen near Gunung Leuser national park, the barn owl (Tyto alba, Appendix II) was used as an attraction in the village. It was seized by the BKSDA and the NGO Scorpion at Agus Salim's home. Scorpion, September 15, 2020.44

September 22, 2020 Aek Pining, South Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Mrs HW was unaware that her birds belonged to protected species. The red lory (Eos rubra, Appendix II) had been given to her 4 months before. As for the changeable hawk-eagle (Spizaetus cirrhatus, Appendix II), she said she had found it injured near a plantation near Batang Toru. After an exchange with the BKSDA, she agreed to part with them. The changeable hawk-eagle will get back to the forest of Batang Toru, and the red lory has been entrusted to the Sibolangit wildlife rescue centre. Scorpion, September 25, 2020.45

MALAYSIA

July 30, 2020

Besar Island, State of Johor, Malaysia

Boarding of 2 pirate ships 1.9 miles off the coast. Seizure of 1,500 oriental magpie-robins (Copsychus saularis). Arrest of 4 men, including 2 Indonesians. The Star, July 31, 2020.46

August 25, 2020 Off Tanjung Kelesa coast, State of Johor, Malaysia



Maritime Enforcement Agency officers detect a shady boat 2 miles off the coast

at around 2am. On board, they find 90 baskets containing 69 white-rumped shamas (Copsychus malabaricus) and 880 oriental magpie-robins (Copsychus saularis). Their value is estimated at 27,000 ringgits (6,400 US\$). A white-rumped shama can be sold between 47 and 59 US\$. An oriental magpie-robin can be sold between 2 and 12 US\$ on the local market.

A second boat arrived on the site to take "the goods" to Indonesia. As the maritime patrol approached, the crew attempted to flee. A Malaysian sailor in his forties reportedly tried to grab a police officer's gun. During the scuffle, he was shot dead. Two other Indonesian traffickers were arrested.

The Borneo Post, August 25, 2020 ; Malay Mail, August 24, 2020.47

OPERATION KHAZANAH September 28, 2020 Setapak, State of Selangor, Malaysia

Seizure of 63 birds of 12 different species including leafbirds (genus Chloropsis), whiterumped shamas (Copsychus malabaricus), stripethroated bulbuls (Pycnonotus finlaysoni), minivets (genus Pericrocotus), sultan tits (Melanochlora sultanea), silver-eared mesias (Leiothrix argentauris, Appendix II) and blue-topped hanging parrots (Loriculus galgulus, Appendix II). Their overall value is reported to be 89,200 ringgits (21,400 US\$ or approximately 340 US\$ per bird). A 49-year-old suspect was arrested.

This was the 3rd intervention within the Operation Khazanah. The first, on January 1st in Senggarang (Johor State), had led to the seizure in a warehouse of 1,825 birds valued at 120,300 ringgits (28,880 US\$). The second, on August 24 also in Setapak, had resulted in the arrest of 2 men in possession of 90 birds of 8 species valued at 70,460 ringgits (16,915 US\$).

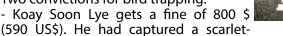
A total of 1,978 birds were seized, with a value equivalent to 67,200 US\$.

The New Straits Times, September 30, 2020.48

SINGAPORE

September 16, 2020 Singapore

Two convictions for bird trapping: - Koay Soon Lye gets a fine of 800 \$



backed flowerpecker (Dicaeum cruentatum) in March 2019 near Seletar. Officers had found him in possession of the bird, birdlime, wire and an electronic caller. He had caught the flowerpecker in the neighbouring area of Sengkang and was looking for more birds. He pleaded guilty.

- Lim Thiam Hay gets a fine of 1,200 \$ (880 US\$). A spotted dove (Spilopelia chinensis) had died of thirst in one of his traps on September 18, 2019. When he found it, he buried it.

Channel News Asia, September 16, 2020. 49



Scarlet-backed flowerpecker, Dicaeum cruentatum

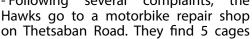
July 7, 2020 Bueng Kho Hai, Pathum Thani **Province, Thailand**



A Hawks agent contacts Mr. A. via Facebook. He expresses interest in 2 birds which he offered for sale for 5,000 baht (161 US\$): a crested serpenteagle (Spilornis cheela, Appendix II) and an Asian barred owlet (Glaucidium cuculoides, Appendix II). After paying a deposit of 1,000 baht (32 US\$), he gets an appointment. Mr. A. is arrested. Seizure of the birds, a perch and a leather falconry glove. DNP Wildhawk, August 10, 2020.50

July 9, 2020

Bang Nam Priao District, Chachoengsao Province, Thailand - Following several complaints, the



in front of the building. Each one contains a redwhiskered bulbul (Pycnonotus jocosus). Suthep Nam Fetch had been illegally holding them for 3 years. The birds were seized and Suthep was taken into custody.

- Search of a house following an anonymous tip on the 1362 hotline. A red-whiskered bulbul (Pycnonotus jocosus) is in a cage in front of the house. A trap cage containing food is placed nearby. Some time later, another red-whiskered bulbul is trapped. The officers seized a total of 3 red-whiskered bulbuls and one hill myna (Gracula *reliaiosa*, Appendix II).

DNP Wildhawk, July 10, 2020.⁵¹

July 24, 2020 Bang Wa, Bangkok Thailand



A Hawks agent poses as a customer to a bird seller on Facebook. They arrange an appointment. The suspect is arrested. He is a middleman. Seizure of 2 juvenile black-collared starlings (Sturnus nigricollis) tossed in a cardboard box. DNP Wildhawk, July 26, 2020.52



Black-collared starlings, Sturnus nigricollis

August 17, 2020 Soi Rom Klao, Bangkok Province, Thailand



Two white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*) are put for sale on Facebook for 1,600 baht (51 US\$). The police pose as customers. A suspect brings the birds in a cardboard box to the meeting place. When he sees the police officers, he releases them. Only one is caught. Arrest of the suspect.

DNP Wildhawk, August 17, 2020.53

VIET NAM

Early July 2020 Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam



Seizure of 2 black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), 2 spotted dove chicks (*Streptopelia chinensis*), 8 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) and a bulbul (genus *Pycnonotus*) for sale on Facebook. ENV, July 7, 2020.⁵⁴

End of July 2020 Sa Pa, Lao Cai Province, Viet Nam



Seizure of a raptor in a private home. It was released after a veterinary examination. ENV, July 26, 2020.⁵⁵

Early August 2020 Binh Duong Province, Viet Nam



Seizure of 6 raptors including a changeable hawkeagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II) after a 4-month investigation by the NGO Education for Nature - Vietnam. ENV, August 4, 2020.⁵⁶

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

Early July 2020

Bihari Basti, Kamrup District, State of Assam, India

Four male concave-casqued hornbills (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I) were shot. They were torn away from the Pobitora sanctuary. Concave-casqued hornbills are easy to shoot at this time. The males are looking for food for their partners, who remain hidden in their nests. If the male dies, the female may starve to death. Moloy Baruah, the president of the local NGO Early Birds, lodged a complaint. Four suspects have been identified. They have not been arrested because of the Covid-19 health crisis.

Northeast Now, July 6, 2020 ; Sentinel Assam, July 6, 2020.⁵⁷

July 1st, 2020

Kathambari, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India

Arrest of Sahidul Islam, Nurjamal Haque and Ganesh Chhetri. Seizure of 5 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II). They say they caught them in the Baikunthapur forest, about 50 km away. A hill myna is said to be sold for 1,500 to 2,000 rupees each (20 to 26.5 US\$). Siliguri Times, July 2, 2020.⁵⁸

July 9, 2020

Hyderabad, Hyderabad District, State of Telangana, India

They were riding a scooter in the chic area of Banjara Hills. They were carrying 3 Alexander parakeets (Psittacula eupatria, Appendix II) in a cage. Agents from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) and the Forest Department stopped the two traffickers in their race.

WCCB, July 13, 2020.59

August 11 and 13, 2020

Boranberia, Nadia District, and Halderpara, North 24 Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India. India-Bangladesh border.

- Seizure in the evening of 30 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and 6 pigeons (family Columbidae) with an estimated value of 49,600 rupees (662 US\$). The smugglers wanted to bring them to Bangladesh. They had to leave them in India but took advantage of the darkness to cross the border and escape. The birds were handed over to the Ranaghat forest office.

- Two suspects were spotted in a bamboo grove. When the border officials came towards them, they fled leaving a cage. Seizure of 2 keel-billed toucans (Ramphastos sulfuratus, Appendix II). The economic value of the pair is estimated at 1,420,000 rupees (18,960 US\$). It has been entrusted to the Alipore Zoological Garden in Kolkata.

Outlook India, August 12, 2020; The Times of India, August 14, 2020.60

August 26, 2020

Bangalore, Bangalore District, State of Karnataka, India

Seizure of 15 macaws (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and a few lovebirds (Agapornis spp., Appendix II) from a freight train. According to the authorities, they were coming from Bangladesh via West Bengal and intended to a buyer in Bangalore. The birds were crammed into cages hidden by tarpaulins. They had had no food nor water for several days. They were entrusted to a care centre.

The Times of India, August 26, 2020.61

September 2, 2020

Nanded, Nanded District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of an Alexandrine parakeet (Psittacula eupatria, Appendix II) and a rose-ringed parakeet (Psittacula krameri) for sale on the market. The 2 suspects managed to escape.

The Times of India, September 4, 2020.62

September 4, 2020

Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure in a pet store of 4 parakeets (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and 10 scaly-breasted munias (Lonchura punctulata).

Hindustan Times, September 4, 2020.63

September 7, 2020

Meerut, Meerut District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



Seizure by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) and the Forest Department of 80 Alexandrine parakeets (Psittacula eupatria, Appendix II) on board a bus arriving from Moradabad. Both drivers were arrested. The birds should be released in the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.

WCCB, September 9, 2020 ; The Times of India, September 8, 2020.64

September 10, 2020 Ramkot, Sitapur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



Gangajali and Ramjanki had killed an Indian peafowl (Pavo cristatus, Appendix III

in Pakistan) " for fun ", they said. They were not discreet enough. Notified by witnesses, the village chief alerted the police. The 2 women were placed in pre-trial detention.

The Times of India, September 11, 2020.65

September 30, 2020

National Highway 19, near Galsi, Purba Bardhaman District, State of West Bengal, India



Seizure of 750 rose-ringed parakeets (Psittacula krameri) and plum-headed parakeets (Psittacula cyanocephala, Appendix II) and 16 hill mynas (Gracula religiosa, Appendix II) in a truck between Durgapur and Panagarh. The 2 suspects were taking them to Galiff Street in Kolkata, where a well-known pet market is held on Sundays. They were arrested after a chase. The birds were from Patna (380 km from Durgapur, in the State of Bihar) and Hazaribagh (220 km away, in the State of Jharkhand).

Outlook India, September 30, 2020; DNA, September 30, 2020 ; WCCB, October 1st, 2020. 66

September 13, 2020

Daraban, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Arrest of Behram Khan and seizure of 55 white-eyed buzzards (*Butastur teesa*, Appendix II) and kestrels (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) from his vehicle during a roadside check.

Dawn, September 14, 2020 ; The Urdu Point, September 16, 2020.⁶⁷

September 16, 2020 Between Dera Ismail Khan and Darya Khan, Punjab Province, Pakistan



The vehicle stopped by the police on the Dera Darya Khan bridge over the Indus

River was full to breaking point with equipment and live bait to trap falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II). Nisar, Khan Zaman and Saleem had brought nets, 55 pigeons, 9 doves (family Columbidae) and 2 black partridges (*Melanoperdix niger*). The vehicle, the birds and the nets were seized and the 3 men arrested.

The Urdu Point, September 16, 2020.68



CYPRUS

September 23, 2020 Near Ayía Nápa, Famagusta District, Cyprus



The slaughter continues. The autumn bird protection camp organised by the

Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) has a turbulent start. Two volunteers, a man and a woman, spot limesticks on bushes and an electronic caller that mimicked the sounds of the Eurasian blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*). They are then attacked by armed poachers, who knocked them down. After uttering death threats, they destroy their telephone. They slip away when the forest guards arrive. Their traps are removed and a complaint is filed.

The bird rescuers are not deterred. A few days



later, a caller emitting the song of a Cyprus warbler (*Sylvia melanothorax*) guides them to a grove of acacia trees where 2 large nets are strung. The 26 Eurasian blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*) and 2 bee-eaters (family Meropidae) already trapped were released.

In 3 weeks, 4 nets and 819 limesticks were removed by the CABS's team.

CABS, September 24 and 29, 2020.⁶⁹

LEBANON

Weekend of August 29-30, 2020 Kobayat, Akkar Governorate, Lebanon

Arrest of 2 poachers. Ten European honey buzzards (*Pernis apivorus*, Appendix II) were found. Seizure of 2 rifles and ammunition.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, August 31, 2020.70



FINLAND

End of July 2020 Pelkosenniemi, Region of Lapland, Finland

Discovery of the carcass of a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) in its eyrie. The death is believed to have occurred in late April or early May. An investigation is initiated. Helsinki Times, July 23, 2020.⁷¹



GUERNSEY (British Crown dependency)

Mid-July and August 2, 2020 **Guernsey Island** - Discovery of a dead common buzzard

(Buteo buteo, Appendix II) next to a

poisoned pigeon. - Discovery of a dying kestrel (Falco tinnunculus, Appendix II). It had been poisoned and died within the day.

A reward of 16,500 £ (21,974 US\$) has been offered by the association of Guernsev Animal Aid, the RSPB Guernsey and the Ornithological Section of La Societé Guernesiaise for any information which could be used to identify the culprit in the poisoning of 4 peregrine falcons (Falco peregrinus, Appendix II).

Guernsey Press, August 5, 2020 ; Bailiwick Express, September 3, 2020.72

IRELAND

September 21, 2020

Daingean, County Offaly, Ireland Sentencing of Anthony Daly to a one month suspended prison term. On



February 13, 2019, National Parks and Wildlife Service agents searched his home and found 4 European goldfinches (Carduelis carduelis) in cages, along with 5 leghold traps and a number of bird traps and cages. The goldfinches were immediately released.

Midlands 103, October 16, 2020.73

UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom

For the year 2019, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds counts 85 incidents of birds of prey poaching, whether by poisoning (25 cases), trapping (9 cases) or shooting (45), 48 in England, 28 in Scotland, 6 in Wales and 3 in Northern Ireland. Two thirds of the culprits were gamekeepers. The victims are 32 common buzzards (Buteo buteo, Appendix II), 21 red kites (Milvus milvus, Appendix II), 7 peregrine falcons (Falco peregrinus, Appendix II), 6 Eurasian sparrowhawks (Accipiter nisus, Appendix II), 4 northern goshawks (Accipiter gentilis, Appendix II), 3 barn owls (Tyto alba, Appendix II), 2 northern harriers (Circus cyaneus, Appendix II), a golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos, Appendix II), a marsh harrier (Circus aeruginosus, Appendix II), a merlin (Falco columbarius, Appendix II), a kestrel (Falco tinnunculus, Appendix II) and a tawny owl (Strix aluco, Appendix II).

RSPB, "Birdcrime 2019", October 1st, 2020.74

Early August 2020

A120 road, Essex County, England, United Kingdom

Discovery of a European goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis) abandoned in a cage at a rest area. Pc Jed Raven, August 7, 2020.75

August 5, 2020

Tilbury, Essex County, England, United Kingdom At 7.45am, the police and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) go to Gaylor Road to search a caravan. Six hybrid goldfinches (genus Carduelis) are seized and 4 suspects arrested for conspiracy to commit theft of vehicles, fencing of stolen property and possession of drugs. Two men are charged.

Echo, August 7, 2020.76

September 25, 2020 Lincoln, Lincolnshire County, England, **United Kingdom**



Sentencing of David Winfield, aged 38, to a 2-year suspended prison term for the

illegal possession of 2 northern goshawks (Accipiter gentilis, Appendix II). He also regularly poached deer. In addition, he is forbidden for 5 years from entering agricultural lands with a hunting dog, or any other dog, without the owner's written permission, in Lincolnshire and the neighbouring counties of Leicestershire, Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

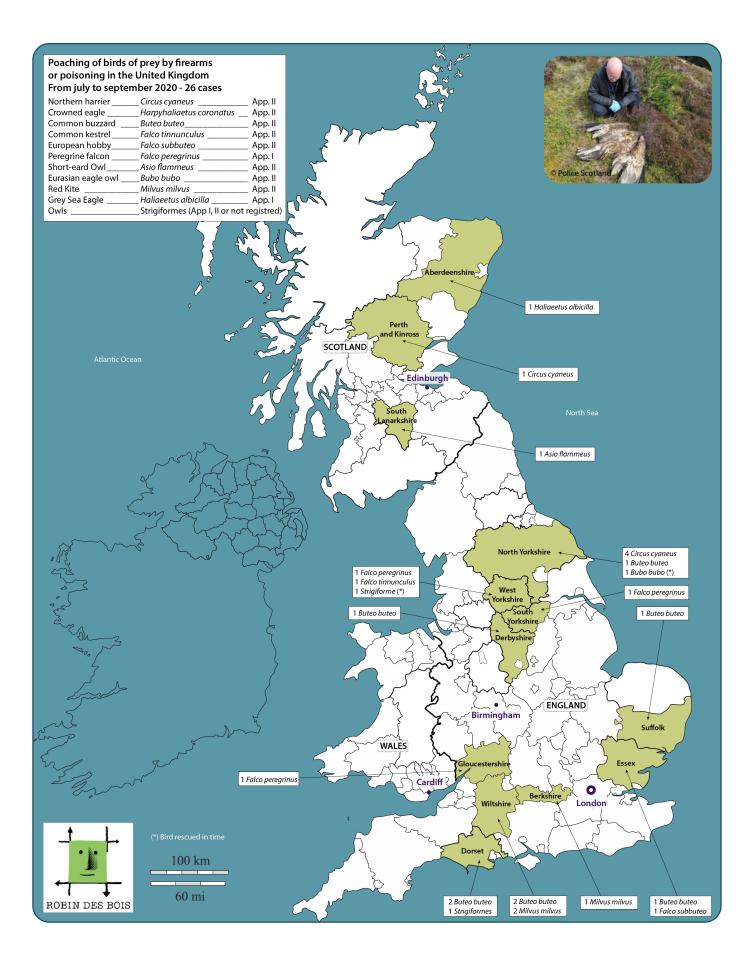
Grantham Journal, September 29, 2020.77

September 2020

River Braan, Perthshire County, Scotland, United Kinadom

The discovery in May of the satellite tag of a golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos, Appendix II) that disappeared 4 years ago has just been reported. A walker spotted it, wrapped in lead sheeting, when the river level had dropped due to drought. It was reportedly thrown into the water at Rumbling Bridge Falls, some 20 km away. A large number of tagged common buzzards (Buteo buteo, Appendix II), sea eagles (Haliaeetus spp., Appendix I or II), red kites (Milvus milvus, Appendix II) and northern harriers (Circus cyaneus, Appendix II) are disappearing around the country without their bodies being recovered, especially on moors where black grooses (Lyrurus tetrix) are traditionally hunted.

The RSPB has listed at least 24 incidents of bird of prey poaching in the county since year 2000. It is calling on the Scottish Government to introduce more control on groose hunting. New rules to reduce poaching of birds of prey are expected. The Guardian, September 25, 2020.78



WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

July 7, 2020

Petit-Quevilly, Department of Seine-Maritime, France

The owner of an illegal bird shop and an accomplice are taken into custody.

The scene was inspected in November 2018. ONCFS agents had found around twenty dead parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II). The 54-yearold owner was selling red-tailed black cockatoos (Calvptorhynchus banksii, Appendix II), blueand-yellow macaws (Ara ararauna, Appendix II), red-shouldered macaws (Diopsittaca nobilis, Appendix II), yellow-crested cockatoos (Cacatua sulphurea, Appendix I) and grey parrots (Psittacus erithacus, Appendix I). The agents had placed some of the birds under seal and prohibited them from being sold. One of them, a red-tailed black cockatoo, has nevertheless been sold to a Swiss client for 9,000 € (10,156 US\$). Paris-Normandie, July 23, 2020.79



Early June- July 8, 2020 Ile-de-France Region, France

Rescue by the 30 Millions d'Amis Foundation of an illegally held blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a Senegal parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*, Appendix II) and a hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) abandoned by their owner. After a one-month quarantine, the 3 birds have been transferred to the Refuge de l'Arche in western France.

Refuge de l'Arche, July 8, 2020.80

July 21, 2020

Forest of Montourey, Department of Var, France

Arrest of a 49-year-old man. He had just caught 3 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) with lime. The police seized 6 other goldfinches at his home.

France Bleu, July 23, 2020.81

August 19, 2020

Langueux, Department of Côtes-d'Armor, France

A man was caught by police trapping a European goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis) with lime in the Saint-Brieuc nature reserve. He was taken into custody and the goldfinch was released. France Bleu, August 19, 2020.⁸²

August 27, September 11 and 22, 2020 France

The Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition had authorized the shooting of 17,460 European turtle doves (*Streptopelia turtur*) for the 2020-2021 hunting season, even though their population had declined by 80% between 1980 and 2015. The Council of State suspended this authorisation on September 11, invoking the precautionary principle.

In another decision on September 22, the Council of State rejected the request of the NGO One Voice to suspend hunting authorisations for other birds in several departments as a matter of urgency: Eurasian skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*) in Lot-et-Garonne, Landes, Gironde and Pyrénées-Atlantiques, northern lapwings (*Vanellus vanellus*), European golden plovers (*Pluvialis apricaria*), thrushes (family Turdidae) and common blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) in the Ardennes.

French Council of State, September 11 and 22, 2020.⁸³

September 2, 2020

Virignin, Department of Ain, France

Three men were arrested and as many European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) rescued. The suspects had placed limesticks around water points. French Biodiversity Office, November 3, 2020.⁸⁴

September 17 and November 19, 2020 Dax, Department of Landes, France Bernard Fargues, 68 years old, a former

electrician, was arrested in December 2019 for poaching 10,000 passerines,



including robins, between 2011 and 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°27 p.56). He caught the birds alive using "matoles", traditional traps placed in fields. In court, he appeared to be unaware that he acted unlawfully. For him, it was rather a kind of combined work and retirement pension. He explained how he skewered the birds for resale. The chickadees were spared, "I released them".

He was sentenced to 8 months in jail suspended an to pay $89.000 \in$ to the 5 civil parties. Among the buyers is the former local rugby star, Jean-Pierre Bastiat, who bought 134 skewers between 2013 and 2019 for 3,350 \in i.e. 25 \in (30 US\$) the skewer of 12 robins, ortolans or skylarks.

Le Parisien, September 17, 2020 ; Ouest France, November 20, 2020.⁸⁵

September 20, 2020

Les Contamines-Montjoie, Department of Haute-Savoie, France

Opening of the shameful black grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*) hunting season. Seizure of a rifle and 2 carcasses of these mythical birds, one male and one female. It is strictly forbidden to kill females due to the population decline. The shooting of males is subject to a quota. The hunter had not placed the mandatory marking bracelet on the remains. Le Dauphine Libéré, September 30, 2020.⁸⁶



September 24, 2020 Albi, Department of Tarn, France

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In December 2019, 2 hunters had shot a one-year-old golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) near Cadalen.

According to them, they had acted to calm guinea fowl panicked by the presence of the bird of prey. When they noticed the GPS tag on its neck, they worked to hide the corpse with the father of one of them, after throwing the tag at a good distance into the Agout river. The French Biodiversity Office led the investigation and the 2 killers were arrested on March 11, 2020.

They were fined 3,000, 2,000 and 1,500 \in (3,574, 2,383 and 1,787 US\$). They also have to compensate the civil parties.

La Dépêche du Midi, March 14,2020 ; Ouest France, September 25, 2020.⁸⁷

NETHERLANDS

Early July 2020

Province of Groningen, The Netherlands

The persecution of birds of prey also continues in the Netherlands. An ornithologist watching over the safety of the nests of Montagu's harriers (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II) found that three chicks had just been dislodged and executed. Their remains were lying in the middle of the road.

Kenniscentrum Akkervogels, August 20, 2020 ; War on Wildlife, August 25, 2020.⁸⁸

July 9, 2020

Westerkwartier, Province of Groningen, The Netherlands



A pigeon fancier trapped in a net and killed at least 2 northern goshawks

(*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II). He was reported to the courts and his traps were seized.

Goshawks are also killed by diving on dead birds trapped with sharp points.

Pigeon fanciers, see "On the Trail" n°12 p.29, n°15 p.31, n°18 p.36 and n°28 p.50.

RTV Noord, July 10, 2020.89

Mid-July 2020

Biddinghuizen, Province of Flevoland, The Netherlands

The province of Flevoland is not favourable for Montagu's harriers (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II). The carcass of a female was found. Her death was unnatural. Furthermore, no pairs in the vicinity had chicks this summer.

Omroep Flevoland, July 15, 2020.90

Early September 2020 The Netherlands

Seizure of 9 protected birds from a breeder. Administrative action by the Dutch food and consumer product safety authority (NVWA) and the police are underway.

Inspecteur Natuur, September 8, 2020.91

SWITZERLAND

August 4, 2020

Bern-Mittelland Administrative District, Canton of Bern, Switzerland On March 26, 2019, the GPS transmitter



of a red kite (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) stops working. The bird died near the Gantrisch nature park. An employee of the ornithological station visits the site. He comes across a 73 year old shepherd. During his searches, he finds the feathers of at least 2 red kites, a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and a common raven (*Corvus corax*). A little further on, he sees the talon of a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) protruding from a compost pile. The carcass is inside.

The shepherd is implicated. At his home, the police find loaded weapons, feathers, wings and carcasses of domestic animals, including that of a sheep. He used to display carcasses to attract the raptors. He is said to be responsible for the death of several red kites equipped with GPS transmitters.

His trial took place in December 2020. He was sentenced to 10,000 Swiss francs (10,930 US\$) in damages to the canton of Bern and a suspended fine of 80 Swiss francs (87 US\$).

Berner Zeitung, August 4, 2020.92

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

OPERATION FRINGILICIA REPEATED OFFENSE Mid-July 2020

Cañada Hermosa, Murcia Region, Spain

In June, an anonymous source informs the Guardia Civil that 3 people are poaching birds, including goldfinches (Carduelis European carduelis), common linnets (Linaria cannabina) and European greenfinches (Chloris chloris). The poachers are identified. They are already known to the justice. They come from Madrid and settle in Alcantarilla to hunt for a few days. A hundred metres apart from each other, near the highway so that they can escape, they pretend to be hikers. They catch birds, shut them in cages and hide them in the cars. The birds are sold for between 50 and 100 € each (56 to 113 US\$). Many die of stress.

The trio was arrested in flagrante delicto near the Cañada Hermosa dump. Seizure of knives, ropes and shears.

Europapress, July 17, 2020.93

OPERATION ORATRIZ Mid-July 2020 Seville, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain

Dismantling of a gang specialising in the online sale of protected birds by the Guardia Civil, assisted by the Royal Moroccan Gendarmerie. 23 arrests. The main suspect used his job in a travel agency to organize the shipments. The birds travelled by bus, mainly to Morocco. Customers were sometimes swindled and received nothing in exchange for their payment. The gang reportedly earned 100,000 \in per year (112,840 US\$).

Seizure of over 280 protected birds, including macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and cockatoos (Cacatuidae, Appendix I or II). Their value is estimated at 550,000 \in (620,620 US\$).

Trafficking destined to the Moroccan middle class, see "On the Trail" n°26 p. 112.

Diario de Sevilla, July 20, 2020.94

End of July 2020

Cabeza del Buey, Province of Badajoz, Autonomous Community of Extremadura, Spain



Sentencing of a farmer to a fine of 20,000 € (22,568 US\$) and a ban from hunting for 2 years. He had poisoned 2 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II). Between 1992 and 2017, 21,000 animals were reportedly poisoned to death in Spain. 30% were birds of prey. Hoy, July 28, 2020.⁹⁵

August 13, 2020

Muskiz, Province of Biscay, Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, Spain



Closure of the investigation about the death in January of a female peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I). The investigation was initiated at the request of the NGO Eguzki Talde Ekologista. The shooter has not been identified. Eguzki recalls that this is not an isolated act. El Correo, August 13, 2020.⁹⁶

Mid-August 2020

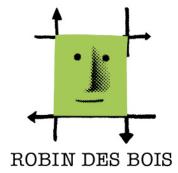
Sabadell, Province of Barcelona, Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain

Dismantling of a network focused on the trafficking of birds. After an investigation of several months, rural agents seized 260 birds in a private home: 117 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), 68 chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), 46 European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), 15 common linnets (*Linaria cannabina*) and 14 bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*). The suspects caught them in Andalusia. They then sold them on illegal markets in the province of Barcelona. The accounting records show revenues of 19,500 \in (22,900 US\$). El Periodico, August 13, 2020.⁹⁷

Mid-September 2020

Segovia, Province of Segovia, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain

Arrest of 2 men in flagrante delicto of setting birdlime sticks in bushes to catch European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*). La Vanguardia, September 14, 2020.⁹⁸



The time is long gone when Christoph Columbus wrote on approaching the Canary Islands that "More than 40 shearwaters came to the ship together".

The Olson's shearwater (*Puffinus olsoni*) and the Canarian shearwater (*Puffinus holeae*) disappeared for good when the Spanish landed on the archipelago and cats and rats were introduced by European settlers.

Hunting shearwaters has long been a passion of the archipelago, and the aftermath remains. A few years ago, Higinio Hernández, who was in charge of environmental protection on the island of Lanzarote, was caught red-handed plucking 10 shearwaters. "When the birds had just died, they were held by the legs and the oil dripped from their beaks was collected. This liquid was sold in vials to cure haemorrhoids and swallowing disorders," recalls one of the elders of the archipelago.

Shearwater hunting has been officially banned on the archipelago since September 1988.¹⁰¹

September 26 – November 23, 2020 Lanzarote Island, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

Witnesses noticed the goings-on of 3 men, including a minor, inspecting holes and cracks in the cliffs. Alerted, the Seprona agents go to the scene. The 3 suspects say they have come to fish, but they don't have any fishing gear. On the other hand, they have a ferret basket and an empty bag. A few metres away, a bag contains 4 dead Scopoli's shearwaters (*Calonectris diomedea*) or Cory's shearwaters (*Calonectris borealis*) and the end of a rope is tied to a rock. At the other end of the rope, at the bottom of a burrow, a ferret has caught another Scopoli's shearwater.

Faced with the facts, the suspects admit that they have come to poach. They are arrested. The surviving shearwater is replaced in its lair, the carcasses are handed over to the Lanzarote authorities and the ferret is entrusted to the Teguise town council.

Scopoli's shearwaters are large seabirds with a wingspan of 1.30 m. They come ashore during the nesting season. They use cavities or burrows in cliffs or rocky islets. They sometimes take over the burrows of wild rabbits.

The perpetrators were fined $7 \in \text{per day for 150 days}$ (a total of 1,050 \in , 1,230 US\$) for violating wildlife protection laws and fined $140 \in \text{for cruelty}$ to animals. The NGO Sociedad Española de Ornitología recalls that "the robbing of shearwater nests was a very common practice in the Canary Islands where the meat of chicks was highly prized". "It was an easily accessible food resource in times of shortage". On the occasion of Covid-19, the custom is back in use.

Cazavision, September 29, 2020 ; Diario de Lanzarote, November 23, 2020.⁹⁹

September 27, 2020

Municipality of Pájara, Fuerteventura Island, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain



At around 7.30 pm, Seprona agents are on patrol to control shellfish harvesting. But it is not the beachgoers who attract their attention. On the Joros beach, when they see them coming towards him, a man runs out of his car with a bag in his hand. He rushes towards the cliff to get rid of it. He is arrested. Several dead Scopoli's shearwaters (*Calonectris diomedea*) or Cory's shearwaters (*Calonectris borealis*) are visible at the water surface and in the rocks. The agents recovered 2 of them. Together with his 2 accomplices, the suspect admits to killing the birds to collect the oil from their beaks. Caza Vision, October 16, 2020.¹⁰⁰

OPERATION MINATI End of September 2020

Near Pampelune, Province of Navarre, Autonomous Community of Navarre, S pain

Seizure of a stuffed black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II). A 36-year-old man was selling it for $150 \in (177 \text{ US}\$)$ on a second-hand classifieds website. He was also offering a European pine marten (*Martes martes*).

Diaro de Navarra, September 24, 2020.102

Mid-July 2020

Camporotondo Etneo, Province of Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy

Check of a Fiat vehicle on the via Dusmet. Inside, the carabinieri find 2 cages confining 10 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and a European greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*). They are handed over to the veterinarians of the Provincial Health Authority. Catania Today, July 21, 2020.¹⁰³

End of August 2020

Near Palermo, Province of Palermo, Region of Sicily, Italy

Seizure of a "large number" of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) from a trafficker's home. He was selling them on the Internet, specifying that he had caught them in the wild. Wild goldfinches are said to be better singers than bred ones. They were released after a veterinary examination.

This is the fourth operation to tackle the capture and sale of protected species in the region in a few weeks. Despite the interventions of the carabinieri, the Ballarò bird market remains active in Palermo (see previous issues).

New Sicilia, August 26, 2020 ; Stretto Web, August 26, 2020.¹⁰⁴

End of August 2020

Rovato, Val Camonica, Collio, Gardone Val Trompia and Monte Maddalena, Province of Brescia, Region of Lombardy, Italy

On this pre-opening day for hunting, arrest of two poachers near the provincial road. They had just killed tree pipits (*Anthus trivialis*) after luring them with a caller.

Four other poachers were attacking flycatchers (family Muscicapidae).

QuiBrescia, September 8, 2020.105

September 3, 2020

Casale Monferrato, Province of Alessandria, Region of Piedmont, Italy

A man is charged with aggravated theft, capture and detention of 2 kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II). The birds were rotting in their droppings. They were entrusted to the Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (LIPU) shelter in Tigliole in the province of Asti.

Telecity News 24, September 4, 2020.¹⁰⁷

September 9, 2020

Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Province of Caserta, Region of Campania, Italy



Seven men are charged with catching and selling protected birds: Pasquale

Maddaluno, 59, and Giovanni Elefante, 52, are under house arrest, while Gennaro Cuozzo, 70, Dario Errera, 34, Corrado Esposito, 62, Damiano Simeone, 38, and Antonio Musella, 52, must report regularly to the police to sign an attendance register.

The investigation had started in 2018. The gang was catching, among others, thrushes (family Turdidae), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and larks (family Alaudidae) in the south of Italy using various illegal methods (traps, nets, calls, callers). It struck in the province of Cosenza (Calabria region), the province of Salerno (Campania region), the province of Foggia (Apulia region) and the province of Potenza (Basilicata region). The birds were then "stored" before being transported to the north of the country for sale. Along the way, they were banded with the complicity of breeders and veterinarians.

Customers, including pet traders, bought them as hunting decoys or as ornamental birds, especially the finches renowned for their songs. The gang's annual turnover was estimated at 350,000 € (417,025 US\$).

Il Meridiano News, September 9, 2020 ; Pupia TVSeptember 9, 2020 ; Green Me, September 10, 2020.¹⁰⁸



Tree pipit, Anthus trivialis

September 12, 2020 Metropolitan City of Genoa, Region of Liguria, Italy



A parrot managed to escape from its cage and caught the attention of the residents of the San Teodoro neighbourhood. It was not registered. At the home of the "owner", the police got their hands on another parrot. The blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and the scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) were handed over to the care of the LIPU shelter in Pavia. Il Secola XIX, September 12, 2020.¹⁰⁹

September 16, 2020 Calanna and Palmi, Province of Reggio Calabria, Region of Calabria, Italy



- L.L., aged 65, and A.G., aged 75, were charged with poaching 26 birds,

including protected species, using prohibited bird calls and out of the hunting season. One of the men did not have a weapon carrying license. The 2 rifles, the munitions and the callers were seized. - S.C., aged 53, was caught in the act of catching European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) in nets.

The birds immediately regained their freedom. QuiCosenza, September 16, 2020.¹¹⁰

Around September 16, 2020 Lanciano, Province of Chieti, Region of Abruzzo, Italy



Seizure of 4 illegally held grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) in a private home by the carabinieri.

Chieti Today, September 16, 2020.111

Around September 25, 2020 Cingoli, Province of Macerata, Region of Marche, Italy

Seizure of 7 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), 3 Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*) and 4 common blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) from a farm. They were not banded and the breeder could not present any documents to justify their keeping. Il Cittadino di Recanati, September 25, 2020.¹¹²

End of September 2020

Paterno, Province of Potenza, Region of Basilicata, Italy

Indictment of a 26-year-old man for possessing of an Eastern rosella (*Platycercus eximius*, Appendix II) and offering it for sale on social networks. The range of Eastern rosellas covers south-eastern Australia and New Zealand.

Basilicata 24, September 29, 2020.¹¹³



Eastern rosella, Platycercus eximius

September 30, 2020 Farra di Soligo, Province of Treviso, Region of Veneto, Italy A 60-year-old man has been charged



with setting nets and traps on his estate. As many as 30 birds were seized from his home, including European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), dunnocks (*Prunella modularis*).

Quotidiano del Piave, October 1st, 2020.¹¹⁴



Between September 20 and 25, 2020 Has Saptan valley, South Eastern Region, Malta

Stopovers in Malta are not without risk for birds on their way to Africa. Fifty honey buzzards (*Pernis apivorus*, Appendix II) had settled in Has Saptan valley. Their presence immediately attracted poachers, despite the Covid-19 curfew. According to CABS, at least 22 shots were fired from 5 locations on September 20. Police managed to confiscate the weapons of one suspect.

On the 21st, 5 shots are fired at birds in flight. One suspect runs away when he sees the CABS volunteers.

On the 22nd, 4 honey buzzards are shot in front of witnesses, but the police don't find the culprits or the carcasses. Two more honey buzzards are shot on the 23rd. A hunter is also arrested in the bird sanctuary of Il-Ballut ta' Marsaxlokk.

On the 25th, a Eurasian hobby (*Falco subbuteo*, Appendix II) was shot while flying, again in the Has Saptan valley.

On September 25, the CABS death toll has risen to more than 12 protected birds killed by firearm, including another honey buzzard and a European roller (*Coracias garrulus*) shot on the 23rd and 24th.

The good news is that 120 marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II) that arrived on the night of 21-22 left without a scratch, despite attempts by poachers.

Stuffed birds are also prized by collectors. Some of them are willing to pay thousands of euros for rollers, storks (genus *Ciconia*) or American flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II).

Malta Today, September 23 and 26, 2020 ; The Shift, September 25, 2020.¹¹⁵



AUSTRALIA

End of July 2020

Near Low Head lighthouse, George Town, State of Tasmania, Australia

Indictment of 2 suspects aged 21 and 30. They had tried to steal a little penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) from its colony. But citizens intervened and gently pulled the bird ou of the trunk of the poachers' car. The police also found 2 little penguin eggs inside. The Guardian, July 27, 2020.¹¹⁶

Early September 2020 Australia

Follow-up of "On the Trail" n° 23 p.54. Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley is commissioning an independent investigation into the circumstances in which the Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment authorized 232 native birds to be exported to Germany between 2015 and 2018, i.e. more than 80% of the birds exported over this period.

Among them were slender-billed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*, Appendix II), whitetailed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*, Appendix II), glossy black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*, Appendix II) and yellow-tailed black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*, Appendix II).

The export permits had been granted to the Association for The Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) for a zoo exhibition, although the recipient had no place open to the public and some birds were sold over the Internet.

The Guardian Australia, September 3, 2020.117



Has Saptan Valley in Malta. Photo sborgmt

VARIOUS REPTILE SPECIES

EASTERN AFRICA

FRANCE (LA REUNION)

September 15, 2020 - May 21, 2021 Saint-André and Saint-Denis, Department of Reunion, France



Seizure at an "educational" farm of 10 turtles, 4 iguanas (*Iguana* spp.,

Appendix II) and 7 Javan rusas (*Rusa timorensis*) which the owner was displaying among llamas, horses and donkeys without having the ability to breed and care for them and without the documents proving their legal origin. Jean-Daniel Vee, the jailer who had insulted the agents of the Brigade de la Nature de l'Océan Indien (Indian Ocean Nature Brigade, BNOI) and the Direction de l'Alimentation, de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt de la Réunion (Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Forestry, DAAF) who had come to proceed with the seizure, was sentenced to a 3-month suspended prison sentence and fined 2,000 \in (2,426 US\$). His wife was also fined 1,450 \in (1,759 US\$).

Clicanoo, September 15, 2020 ; Linfo.re, May 21, 2021.¹

SOUTH AFRICA

August 16, 2020 Amathole District, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Scandal in the district. Michael Burmeister, who is in charge of the protection of biodiversity for the local government, is also the operator of Syringa Wildlife, which has specialised for the past ten years in the delivery of leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II) and armadillo girdled lizards (*Ouroborus cataphractus*, Appendix II) to zoos around the world. While the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) investigates, Michael Burmeister remains in post. Netwerk24, August 17, 2020.²

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mid-July 2020 - March 25, 2021

State of Texas, United States of America Dismantling of a US and international reptile network. Alejandro Carrillo admits that he had transported the live animals



from Mexico to the United States of America, cooperated in the delivery of the animals within the United States and received nearly 100,000 US\$ as a conveyor for thousands of animals. The investigation file estimates the value of the wildlife smuggling at 3.5 million US\$. On each trip in a Mercedes Benz, Carrillo negotiated with the Mexico City dealers. For a shipment of 2 Mexican spotted wood turtles (Rhinoclemmys rubida), 23 boas constrictor (Boa constrictor, Appendix I ou II) and 2 Mexican spinytailed iguanas (Ctenosaura pectinata, Appendix II), he requested 700 US\$ and justified the price as follows: " Crossings of this quantity of animals is difficult because the heat makes it difficult to hide the animals and the officers check more often." For a delivery in Missouri of Central American river turtles (Dermatemys mawii, Appendix II) he was outbiding: "The box is quite heavy and, on top of that, they bite hard." "It was pretty scary with those 2 monsters." Carrillo had his phone tapped for at least 4 years. In Mexico, the packages left from Ciudad Juárez, the meeting point for the animals to be exfiltrated, and the border was usually crossed in El Paso. Once on US soil, some animals were shipped by FedEx or US Postal Service for the last shipment leg towards the final buyers. An accomplice in Oklahoma was the assistant deliveryman.

Alejandro Carrillo was sentenced to 20 months in prison followed by 2 years of probation and a fine of 2,000 US\$.

E&E News, July 14, 2020 ; US Department of Justice, March 25, 2021.³

Week of September 24, 2020

Bonneville County, State of Idaho, United States of America



The police found the man "very agreeable" and "very cooperative". Following a denunciation, they had arrived in force accompanied by a veterinarian. In his garage, he was keeping an alligator (*Alligator* spp., Appendix I or II) of 2.13 m in length for a weigh of 36 kg, which had to be clamed with sedatives, and in his house 2 caimans (Alligatoridae, Appendix I or II), 2 snapping turtles (family Chelydridae), 2 rubber boas (*Charina bottae*, Appendix II) and a Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*, Appendix II), all of which were in quite good shape. They were evacuated to licensed facilities, while the possessor was given a simple warning.

EastIdahoNews.com, September 24, 2020.⁴

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

OPERATION RATTUS July 22, 2020 Aracaju, State of Sergipe, Brazil

Two home seizures by the federal police:

- 2 lizards (Squamates), 4 cobras (family Elapidae) and 2 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II). Indictment of a 40-yearold man. He was selling the animals.

- 13 cobras (family Elapidae) and one owl (Strigidae, Appendix I or II). Arrest of a 27-year-old suspect. The animals were entrusted to the Ibama (Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis).

NE Notícias, July 27, 2020.5

September 24, 2020 Microregion of Piumhi, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

He had shopped on the Internet with a trafficker based in São Paulo: 1,000 reais (181 US\$) for 2 iguanas (Iguana spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 "jabutis" - red-footed yellow-footed or (Chelonoidis tortoises carbonarius or Chelonoidis denticulatus, Appendix II) - which



were to be delivered by mail to his workplace. However, the city's police, alerted by the DEMA (Departamento Estadual de Investigacao de Crimes contro o Meio Ambiente), replaced the postman. When the package was opened, the animals were wrapped in socks. The buyer was taken to the police station and the reptiles were entrusted to the veterinary laboratory of the University of Formiga. O Popular, September 25, 2020.⁶

COLOMBIA

Early August 2020

Laguna del Chairá, Municipality of Cartagena del Chairá, Department of Caquetá, Colombia

Release in the forest of an anaconda (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II) of more than 5 m and 5 turtles - 4 toadhead turtles (*Mesoclemmys gibba*) and a yellow-headed sideneck (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) - rescued from trafficking. El Deber, August 3, 2020.⁷

MEXICO

August 15, 2020

San Luis Potosi International Airport, State of San Luis Potosí, Mexico

Seizure of 6 juvenile boas constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and 7 furrowed wood turtles (*Rhinoclemmys areolata*) in a parcel from Yucatan to Monterrey, close to the border with the United States of America.

PorEsto.net, August 15, 2020.8



CHINA

September 3, 2020 Sunan Shuofang International Airport, Jiangsu Province, China



One belt made of crocodile skin (Crocodylidae, Appendix II) and one handbag made of python skin (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) seized by customs officers from an arrival passenger's luggage. Chinese Customs, September 10, 2020.⁹



ITALY

OPERATION REPTILIA July-September 2020 Italy



With more than 500 checks carried out in 3 months by the CITES Carabinieri

Group, Operation Reptilia put pressure on animal fairs and exhibitions, breeders, traders and private individuals. 18 administrative fines totalling $60,000 \in (70,212 \text{ US})$ were imposed and more than 100 reptiles were seized, including protected species (Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II), iguanas (*Iguana spp.*, Appendix II), snakes, etc.) but also common sliders (*Trachemys scripta*) defined as an "invasive exotic species" for which Italian legislation provides for an expeditious fate: "control, detection and rapid eradication".

Il Fatto Quotidiano, October 10, 2020; Agenzia Giornalistica Italia, October 10, 2020; Il Messaggero TV, October 10, 2020.¹⁰

TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

Week of July 27, 2020

Tsimanampetsotsa National Park, Madagascar

The patrol at work despite the Covid-19 poachers 4 turtle crisis arrested with the help of villagers and the gendarmerie. Newsmada, August 1st, 2020.¹

Week-end of August 15-16, 2020 Mahajanga, Boeny Region, Madagascar

A French national and an Italian are placed under court supervision. They are suspected of poaching and attempting to sell 27 tortoises. Madagascar Tribune, August 17, 2020.²

NORTHERN AMERICA

CANADA

August 2020

Kingston, Province of Ontario, Canada

Collins Creek turtle protectionists had installed protections around the nests to prevent attacks of natural predators. During the night from Saturday to Sunday, a poacher came and stole between 250 and 300 eggs of snapping turtles (Chelydra serpentina, Appendix III in the United States of America) and painted turtles (Chrysemys picta) from 11 of the 18 protected nests.

Global News, August 24, 2020; CTV News, August 25, 2020.³

LATIN AMERICA

BOLIVIA

September 10, 2020 Rio Mamoré, Department of Beni, Bolivia

A brown-water navy patrol at the confluence of the Pojige and Mamoré rivers came across two crafts carrying 10,500 eggs of the yellow-headed sideneck turtles (Podocnemis unifilis, Appendix II) in 21 jute bags. The military confiscated them and gave them to the rural community of Camiaco. Los Tiempos, September 10, 2020.4

BRAZIL

July 7, 2020 Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Police raid on a luxury home in the course of an investigation into drug trafficking to Europe and seizure of 11 turtles, yellow-headed sideneck turtles (Podocnemis unifilis, Appendix II) and "jabutis" (Chelonoidis carbonarius or Chelonoidis denticulatus, Appendix II). Federal Police, July 7, 2020.⁵

July 20, 2020

Leopoldina, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil



Road check on the BR-116 by the Federal Police. Opening of the trunk: 1,459 "jabutis" (Chelonoidis carbonarius or Chelonoidis denticulatus, Appendix II) of which 45 were dead and 17 birds including 9 cockatiels (Nymphicus hollandicus). Three men have been arrested. They say they bought the animals in Bahia and intended to sell them in Juiz de Fora, 1,400 km away.

Estado de Minas, July 20, 2020; O Popular, July 21, 2020.⁶

September 18, 2020

Cruzeiro do Sul, State of Acre, Brazil

When the police arrived in front of the shop reported to them, a strong smell of meat was flowing out of a door ajar. Inside, 4 people were busy cutting up and weighing more than 400 kg of wild meat divided in 6 bags, a polystyrene box and a wheelbarrow. 19 red-footed or yellow-footed tortoises (Chelonoidis carbonarius or Chelonoidis denticulatus, Appendix II), still alive, were on the ground. The traffickers stated that they obtained the meat close to the Rio Gama area, in the State of Amazonas.

G1, September 18, 2020.⁷

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

July 24, 2020 Shaxian District, Fujian Province, Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, Zibo, Shandong Province, Dalian, Liaoning Province and Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China





After spotting a suspicious traffic on WeChat, the Shaxian police has spread investigation out in 5 provinces. After 2 months, 6 suspects were arrested and several hundred shells or stuffed turtles were seized: Galapagos giant tortoises (Chelonoidis niger, Appendix I), Madagascar tortoises (Astrochelys yniphora, Appendix I), radiated tortoises (Astrochelys radiata, Appendix I), Horsfield's tortoises (Testudo horsfieldii, Appendix II), Aldabra giant tortoises (Aldabrachelys ajaantea, Appendix II) and leopard tortoises (Stigmochelys pardalis, Appendix II) accompanied by some lion bones, worked ivories and chloroformed green iguanas (Iguana iguana, Appendix II). The overall economic value of these animals caught all around the world is estimated at over 10 million yuan (over 1.4 million US\$). Cctv.com, July 25, 2020.8

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

CAMBODIA

Early September 2020 Around Trapeang Rung, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia

Seizure by a Wildlife Alliance ranger patrol of 7 yellow-headed tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II) destined for export to Viet Nam or China. The poachers were arrested.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, September 8, 2020.9

September 10, 2020 Pailin Province, Cambodia

Pablo Kang, Australia's ambassador to Cambodia, has given in the sirens of fashion. He posted a photo of his meal based of softshell turtle (family Trionychidae) on Twitter. He quickly removed his post in the face of the outrage provoked and he apologised. According to him, the meat was from a legally bred turtle, and the meal had been offered to him during an official visit. The ambassador has also pictured an eel soup before savouring " this delicacy"

Daily Sabah, September 17, 2020.¹⁰

PHILIPPINES

July 9, 2020

Manila, Province of Metro Manila, Philippines

Arrest of 2 traffickers and seizure of 42 turtles, including 11 spotted pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II) and diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II). None of these species live in the wild in the Philippines. According to the officer responsible for the investigation, they have been imported under the cover of the trade in ornemental fish. Traffic, July 16, 2020.¹¹

SINGAPORE

July 22 and August 5, 2020 Woodlands Checkpoint, Singapore

The truck coming from Malaysia was carrying paper towels and toilet paper, basic necessities in these times of



lockdown. At the request of an acquaintance, the driver had also taken aboard 7 leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II) native of southern and eastern Africa. He was promised between 35 US\$ for the commission. He was sentenced to 2 weeks in prison. Malay Mail, August 6, 2020.¹²



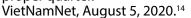
VIET NAM

Early July 2020 Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Seizure of a Chinese stripe-necked turtle (*Mauremys sinensis*, Appendix III in China) and transfer to the Cu Chi Rescue Center. ENV, July 11, 2020.¹³

July 31, 2020 Huong Hoa, Tuyen Hoa District, Quang Binh Province, Viet Nam

The young man wanted to save a keel-backed turtle (*Cuora mouhotii*, Appendix II) and an Indochinese box turtle (*Cuora galbinifrons*, Appendix II) caught in Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park. Offered on the market, they were to end up as stew. He bought them and handed them over to the proper quarter.



August 18, 2020 Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam The Facebook account served as a



platform to sell imported turtles. Tip to ENV hotline on July 14, verification and gathering of information by the NGO, then report to authorities. They intervened at the seller's premises and seized 64 turtles, including radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I), Burmese starred tortoises (*Geochelone platynota*, Appendix I), Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I), African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II) and leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II).

ENV, August 20, 2020.¹⁵

August 21, 2020

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Seizure by the police informed by ENV of 2 yellow-headed tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), one yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II) and one giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) for sale on the street. ENV, August 24, 2020.¹⁶

Early September 2020 Cau Treo Border Post, Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam. Border with Laos.

Taken in charge by the NGO Save Vietnam's Wildlife at the request of the police, 8 yellow-headed box turtles (*Cuora aurocapitata*, Appendix II), 6 keel-backed turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*, Appendix II) and one impressed tortoise (*Manouria impressa*, Appendix II) were transported to Pu Mat national park. They had been seized on traffickers. SVW, September 8, 2020.¹⁷

September 9, 2020 Buon Ma Thuot, Dak Lak Province, Viet Nam



Four months after the seizure from his home of 127 tortoises and freshwater turtles (see "On the Trail" n°29 p. 136), including Indochinese box turtles (*Cuora galbinifrons*, Appendix II), black marsh turtles (*Siebenrockiella crassicollis*, Appendix II) and yellow-headed tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), Hoang Minh Trien has been placed under house arrest. The investigation is slowly progressing. The turtles have been quickly transferred to rescue and conservation facilities. VnExpress, September 10, 2020.¹⁸

September 16, 2020 Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Two giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) were for sale on a sidewalk. A wildlife friend bought them and called the Education for Nature - Vietnam hotline. They were transferred to the Cu Chi Rescue Center. ENV, September 16, 2020.¹⁹

September 25, 2020 Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam



One-year prison sentence for a trafficker caught on a bus in December 2019 while

transporting 3 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I), 2 Indochinese box turtles (*Cuora galbinifrons*, Appendix II) and 13 Chinese four-eyed turtles (*Sacalia quadriocellata*, Appendix II). In its plea, Education for Nature -Vietnam called for a deterrent punishment. ENV, October 3, 2020.²⁰

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BANGLADESH

September 22, 2020 Patuakhali, Patuakhali District, Barisal Division, Bangladesh

A Rapid Action Battalion team picked up Suklal Biswas in the bus he was travelling in to Jessore (Khulna division). He was carrying 29 live turtles. Suklal Biswas and the reptiles were handed over to the police.

The Daily Star, September 23, 2020.²¹

July 27, 2020 Loni Katra, Barabanki District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure of 120 kg of Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I) finely chopped meat pieces kept in dry ice and concealed under fish. Pieces of legs allowed to identify the species. Six people were arrested. Guddu has contacts with the fishermen-poachers and Ramanand Bhagat has contacts to sell the meat. The ring is active in several Indian states. This is the first time such seizure has been performed in Uttar Pradesh. Smuggling abroad is not excluded. Interpol has been called in.

The Indian press explains that vegetarian and docile hard-shelled turtles are sought after as pets while carnivorous softshell turtles are poached for their meat. The cartilages are also smuggled to China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia to end up into soup.

Jubilee Post, July 28, 2020; The Times of India, July 28, 2020.²²

OPERATION WILDNET-III August 11, 2020

Bhopal, Bhopal District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India Hufaiza Abde Ali Bohra was selling wildlife on the Internet. He was arrested on his motorbike with 8 Indian star tortoises (Geochelone elegans, Appendix I) and an Indian tent turtle tentoria, (Pangshura Appendix II).



The Hitavada, August 12, 2020; WCCB, August 14, 2020.²³

August 12, 2020

Kadunala, Amethi District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

The inspection of Ramesh's vehicle led to the seizure of 502 turtles of unspecified species. His accomplice Vishal managed to flee. Outlook India, August 13, 2020.²⁴

August 22, 2020

Byadarahalli, Urban Bangalore District, State of Karnataka, India

Traffickers can have a real gift of the gab. At 4, they were soliciting passers-by on Magadi Road with a green aventurine stone weighing 1 kg which, they said, had healing powers and attracted prosperity. They also carried an Indian star tortoise (Geochelone elegans, Appendix I) and an Indian black turtle (Melanochelys trijuga, Appendix II) in their rig. Three of the smooth talkers were arrested, but they did not stop smooth-talking. They managed to convince the police that the turtles should be kept at the police station and worshipped in order to attract a "huge" prosperity. Only the seizure of the aventurine was duly recorded and the reptiles were placed in a bucket in a corner of the station. The Forest Department ended up being alerted. The police should soon reluctantly part with the two unlucky ones.

The Times of India, August 29, 2020.²⁵

September 1st, 2020 Gorakhpur, Gorakhpur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Benefiting from а god-given tip, the Forest Department turned up in aquarium shops in the There they city. found 30 Indian tent turtles (Pangshura tentoria, Appendix II) and Indian roofed turtles (Pangshura tecta, Appendix I). Two people were arrested. Business World, September 2, 2020.²⁶

OPERATION WILDNET-3 September 4, 2020 Bhopal, Bhopal Distri

Bhopal, Bhopal District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau agents tracked the sale of an Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I) on social networks. Bhuneshwar Sahu was arrested and the tortoise was seized. Sahu stated that he had bought it from Sohail Ahmed and Imran Ali. After their arrest, they in turn denounced Mahendra Kumar, owner of an aquarium shop. He admitted that he had also sold an Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I).

The Hitavada, September 6, 2020; WCCB, September 7, 2020.²⁷

September 9, 2020

Sanarudravaram, Krishna District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Armed with good intelligence, Kalidindi police and Forest Department officials were able to intercept a van carrying 550 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I) of various sizes. The traffickers Ranjit Biswas, P. Nagabushanam and K. Hari Prasad intended to deliver them in Odisha. They had bought them from villagers around Kolleru Lake. The turtles were released by a court order.

The Hindu, September 11, 2020.²⁸

September 16, 2020 Dhubri, Dhubri District, State of Assam, India

Seizure of approximately 20 kg of cut turtle meat sold for 1,200 rupees/kg (16.40 US\$/kg) at the Boy's Club. The establishment was closed by the authorities.

Northeast Now, September 17, 2020; The Assam Tribune, September 17, 2020.²⁹

PAKISTAN

August 29, 2020 Rawalpindi District, Punjab Province, Pakistan



All-out seizures across the district during an operation led by Rizwana Aziz, Wildlife

Officer: 4 turtles including 2 brown river turtles (*Pangshura smithii*, Appendix II) and 2 Indian narrowheaded softshell turtles (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II) and 7 partridges (subfamily Perdicinae). The female officer and her agents imposed fines totalling 130,000 rupees (665 US\$). At Pirwadhai bus stand, an unclaimed parcel arriving from Faisalabad contained 300 baya weavers (*Ploceus philippinus*). The birds were released in Loi Bher forest. Dawn, August 30, 2020.³⁰



Brown river turtle, Pangshura smithii



FRANCE

Mid-August 2020

EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg, Department of Haut-Rhin, France Seizure of 2 common tortoises (*Testudo*



graeca, Appendix II) in a cardboard box. The Moroccan passenger was trying to import them into Switzerland. Fine of 500 Swiss francs (550 US\$).

Les Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace, August 21, 2020.³¹

ITALY

Early August 2020

Port of Ancona, Province of Ancona, Region of Marche, Italy

Seizure of 2 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II). The 2 Albanians landing from the ferry said they had caught them in the wild and intended to give them to a friend. Albania is one of the 13 countries in the natural range of the Hermann's tortoise.

Il Resto Del Carlino, August 5, 2020.³²

September 19, 2020

Novara, Province of Novara, Region of Piedmont, Italy



The carabinieri had come to deal with a 30m³ illegal waste dump, including fruit and vegetable crates. They left with 6 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) held without authorisation. ANSA, September 19, 2020.³³

MALTE

End of August 2020 Malta

Seizure of 3 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and the vehicle transporting them. Newsbook, August 25, 2020.³⁴

SNAKES



Great Basin rattlesnake, Crotalus oreganus ssp. lutosus

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

September 2020 Limpopo Province, South Africa

A snake rescuer finds an injured female Southern African python (Python natalensis, Appendix II) in a water canal. It has signs of laceration and mouth injuries. It weighs 45 kg for 4.1 m long. Its excess weight suggests that it is an illegal pet that has escaped from its cage or has been abandoned. After treatment at the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, it was released.

Johannesburg Wildlife Vet, September 17, 2020.¹

NAMIBIA

August 4, 2020

Kahenge, Kavango West Region, Namibia

Seizure of 3 python skins (Python spp., Appendix I or II). Arrest of Nepando Nicodemus Sitoka and Imarwa Petrus Haingura. Republikein, August 11, 2020.²

September 28, 2020 - May 15, 2021 Kamanjab, Kunene Region, Namibia



Arrested in September 2020, Josef Selvarius Karunga was fined 4,000 \$ (289 US\$) 8 months later for illegal possession of a python skin (Python spp., Appendix I

or II). Republikein, October 8, 2020; The Namibian Sun, June 2, 2021.³

NORTHERN AMERICA)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

September 5, 2020

Boise, State of Idaho, United States of America

Charlie Justus, a Fish and Game Department officer, was involved in the search of the 25-year-old suspect's home. "We were more than a bit surprised by what we discovered": more than 30 venomous snakes, including Great Basin rattlesnakes (Crotalus oreganus ssp. lutosus), endemic to Idaho, but also exotic species: an Indian cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), an Indochinese spitting cobra (Naja siamensis, Appendix II), 2 monocled cobras (Naja kaouthia, Appendix II), a flat-nosed pit viper (Trimeresurus puniceus), 2 Vogel's pit vipers (Trimeresurus vogeli), 2 Cape coral snakes (Aspidelaps lubricus) 2 hognosed pit vipers (Porthidium nasutum), one African bush viper (Atheris squamigera), one black spitting cobra (Naja nigricincta) and one massasauga (Sistrurus catenatus).

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, September 9, 2020.4



September 23, 2020

Topeka, State of Kansas, United States of America

David Kidd, 54, was arrested and charged with illegal possession of drugs and venomous snakes. During the search, police found methamphetamine and 2 copperhead snakes (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) which were entrusted to the Northeast Kansas Rescue Organization.



WIBW, September 24, 2020; CJ online, September 24, 2020.⁵

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

Planaltina and Brasilia, Federal District, Guará, State of São Paulo, Brazil

The ring supported by several public servants began to crack when a veterinary student was bitten by a cobra (genus *Naja*). Pedro Henrique Santos Krambeck Lehmkul was rushed to a private clinic and remained in a coma for several days. He was saved in extremis by an antidote from the Butantan Research Institute in São Paulo.

The investigation was concluded with multiple indictments:

- Pedro Henrique Santos Krambeck Lehmkul, a snake collector and tamer who was left out on temporary release. He owes this favour to his active involvement in the investigation.

- His mother, Rose Meire dos Santos Lehmkul, who looked after the snakes and frozen mice that had to be heated in a bain marie before being given to cobras, boas (Boidae, Appendix I or II) and corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*).

- His father-in-law, Eduardo Condi, colonel of the PMDF (Federal District Military Police), who was aware of the trafficking and had accepted that his private home was used as a point of detention and transaction.

- Joaquim Elias Costa Paulino, commander of the BPMA (Military Environmental Police Battalion), who had made an agreement with an accomplice of Pedro Krambeck to have the stinging cobra found at around 7pm in a crate on the edge of a commercial area in the southern suburbs of the capital. The Krambeck clan intended to cover up the matter by this stratagem and to avoid the extension of a compromising investigation.

- Gabriel Ribeiro, who deposited the cobra at the place agreed upon with the police and who is thought to have benefited from the largesse of CETAS (Centro de Triagem e Reabilitação de Animais Silvestres) in Brasilia to "recover" 2 rainbow boas (*Epicrates* spp.) seized early 2019 in the hands of traffickers by the Brazilian security forces. ... - Fabiana Volkweis, a teacher at the Centro Universitário do Planalto Central Apparecido dos Santos (UNICEPLAC) veterinary school, who allegedly advised one of her students, an accomplice of Krambeck, to disperse the snakes in the forest.

The most worrying aspect of this villainous affair, which once again implicates veterinary circles, is the compromising behaviour of a CETAS. The mission of these establishments, which are under the supervision of the Ibama, is to take in wild animals that have fallen victim to trafficking, to release them into the wild when possible or to hand them over to zoos or other approved shelters. The coordinator of CETAS in Brasilia, Adriana da Silva Mascarenhas, has sold or resold to members of the Krambeck clan snakes of Amazonian or exotic origin, including several poisonous specimens, but also blue-fronted amazons (Amazona aestiva, Appendix II), orange-winged parrots (Amazona amazonica, Appendix II), and at least one black-(Callithrix pencilled marmoset penicillata, Appendix II) to one acquaintance "to help her overcome her depression". Her assistant, Radyner Leyff, also a veterinary student, was involved in the caretaking of the CETAS and the care of the animals and as such had a permanent license to transport snakes. Leyff was a Krambeck's friend.

UOL Notícias, July 9, 2020; RIC Mais, July 16, 2020; G1, July 23 and 27 and August 1st, 2020; Olhar Animal, August 15, 2020. ⁶





July 10, 2020 Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil



A teenager was seen in the street with a snake. The police went to his home and discovered 2 boas (*Boa* spp., Appendix I or II), a male 2.6 m long and a female 3.6 m long. According to his mother, they were purchased from a breeding farm in Goiás and were well treated, let to roam free in the yard during the day, and placed in boxes at night. However, they did not have the Ibama's authorisation to have such pets. The boas were seized.

Correio Braziliense, July 10, 2020.⁷

July 10, 2020 Mirassol, State of São Paulo, Brazil



Seizure of 41 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*). The 3 females and 38 juveniles were confined in plastic boxes. They were handed over to the Rio Presto Zoo. The suspect was fined 10.2 thousand reais, or 1,883 US\$. The breeding of corn snakes is prohibited in Brazil.

Diário da Região, July 10, 2020.8

July 13, 2020 Natal and Lagoa de Velhos, State of Río Grande do Norte, Brazil

- In the afternoon, seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) and a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) kept without authorisation by a private individual.

- During the night, 3 jararacas (*Bothrops jararaca*) shut in plastic bottles were seized in a private home. The 2 suspects were released after being questioned at the police station. The range of the jararacas covers Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. G1, July 14, 2020. ⁹



Mid-July 2020 Brasilia Zoo, Federal District, Brazil

A Vogel's pit viper (*Trimeresurus vogeli*) is awaiting to learn about its fate at the Brasilia Zoo. Smuggled in and seized, it is currently under quarantine there. Since its venom is lethal to humans, it risks being finished off if it is not possible to import anti-venom manufactured by the Thai Red Cross. This species lives in the wild in the south of the Indochinese peninsula in the residual primary forests. Metrópoles, July 14, 2020.¹⁰

September 13, 2020 Aguas Claras, Federal District, Brazil

At 10pm on a Sunday evening, a man calls the police. A common kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula*) had just appeared on his fourth floor balcony. It had time to change balconies before it was caught by a snake skilled police team. No resident claims ownership. The snake was



first entrusted to the Brasilia Zoo, but it finally went to a pound for exotic animals managed by Ibama. Lampropeltis getula live in the southern United States or Mexico.

G1, September 16, 2020; Correio Braziliense, September 16, 2020.¹¹

September 14, 2020 Maceió, State of Alagoas, Brazil

The X-rays revealed the presence of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) inside the parcel bound for Rio de Janeiro, more than 2,000 km away. Alerted by the post agents, the Ibama seized it. It is 1.5 m long.

Olhar Animal, September 16, 2020.¹²

September 21, 2020 Presidente Alves, State of São Paulo, Brazil



A woman was fined 2,400 reais (436 US\$) for illegal possession of 2 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*). They remain under her responsability until the authorities find an appropriate home for them.

G1, September 22, 2020.¹³

COSTA RICA

September 15, 2020

Monteverde, Province of Puntarenas, Costa Rica

Seizure of eyelash vipers (*Bothriechis schlegelii*), black-speckled palm pit vipers (*Bothriechis nigroviridis*) and Central American bushmasters (*Lachesis stenophrys*) in a very poor state of health. The survivors were transferred to the Clodomiro Picado Institute.

La Nación, September 29, 2020.14



CHINA

End of July 2020 Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China



Seizure of an erhu, a traditional Chinese musical instrument looking like a vielle ('hurdy-gurdy'), in a package from Mexico. The sound box, traditionally made of snake skin, was in this case made of Burmese python skin (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). The instrument will be destroyed. Chinese Customs, July 23, 2020.¹⁵

September 17 and 21, 2020 Lok Ma Chau Control Point, Hong Kong, China. Border with Mainland China.



Seizure of 148 items made of snake skins, including pythons (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), with an estimated value of 740,000 \$ (95,500 US\$). The packages, coming from Indonesia via Shenzhen, officially contained clothing. The recipient was arrested on September 21.

Hong Kong Customs, September 22, 2020.¹⁶

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

PHILIPPINES

July 7, 2020 Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines

In the poultry area of the Arrangue market, 5 plastic bottles each contained a cobra (family Elapidae). An inspector from the market administration office, Zenaida Mapoy, heard hissing noises as he passed by. According to him, cobra trading is not uncommon there. No arrests were made. The investigation is ongoing.



Minority Reporter, July 10, 2020; ABS CBN News, July 8, 2020.¹⁷

Early and Mid-August 2020 Binh Phuoc Province, Viet Nam

- The hotline of the NGO Education for Nature -Vietnam (ENV) led to the seizure of a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). It was shut in a cage behind a church. ENV alerted the environmental police, who seized it and released it in Bu Gia Map national park.

- A few days later, another Burmese python was rescued just in time thanks to the joint efforts of ENV and the Ministry of Forest Protection. It was on the menu of a restaurant.

ENV, August 5 and 16, 2020. 18

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 18, 2020

India Nepal Border Zone, Balrampur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Arrest by a joint patrol of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and the Forest Department of a person arriving from Nepal in possession of a king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II). SSB, July 18, 2020.¹⁹

July 20, 2020

Patnur, Nanded District, State of Maharashtra, India

Six people, Parmeshwar Kokate, Satwaji Dumne, Raju Gaikwad, Pandi Yelane, Apparao Kokate, Rama Patange and Nagorao Mirase, are arrested after having killed an Indian python (*Python molurus molurus*, Appendix I). A 7th person, who posted photos of their feat on social networks, is taken into custody.

The Times of India, July 23, 2020.²⁰

July 31, 2020

Pakuyahat, Malda District, State of West Bengal, India

Following the thread of an ongoing investigation, Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officials assisted by police officers from Bamangola station around deployed the petrol station. Mohammad Kalam alias Alam Miya and Masfigue Alam were caught in the trap. They were carrying 600 g of cobra venom worth an



estimated 10 million rupees (132,450 US\$) in their vehicle. Pakuyahat is located about 10 km from the border with Bangladesh. Siliguri Times, July 31, 2020.²¹

July 30 and 31, 2020

Vadodara, Vadodara District, State of Gujarat, India

Five people were arrested while trying to sell an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) for 4,200,000 rupees (55,630 US\$). A police officer posed as a buyer. The sale was to take place on National Highway 8, from where, in case of a mishap, it would have been easy for the traffickers to escape. However, Arun Khatri, Zakir Hussain Abdul Karim Khatri and Govind Rabari were arrested, followed by Chintan Parmar and Dinesh Mochi.

Daily Hunt, July 31, 2020 ; Asian Newsable, August 1st, 2020.²²

August 19, 2020

Pune, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India Arrest of Mahesh Bhimaji Thorat and Chandrakant Kashinath Deshmukh, in possession of an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) measuring 1.11 m long and weighing 3 kg. Its economic value is estimated at 2,200,000 rupees (29,377 US\$). It has been entrusted to the Rajiv Gandhi Zoo. The Indian Express, August 19, 2020.²³

REPEATED OFFENSE August 23, 2020

Neriamangalam, Ernakulam District, State of Kerala, India

Biju V., nicknamed 'Marapatti' (local name for the Asian palm civet) Biju for his tendency to poaching, killed an oriental ratsnake (*Ptyas mucosa*) (family Colubridae) that had slithered into his house. Apparently drunk, he not only ate part of it, but also tried to sell the remains as python meat. This did not bring him any luck: some people who did not hold him close to their hearts reported him. He was arrested. Oriental ratsnakes are diurnal snakes of about 2.5 m in length that feed mainly on rodents and amphibians. They are hunted for their meat and skin.

Deccan Herald, August 24, 2020 ; The Times of India, August 24, 2020.²⁴

September 11, 2020

Dediyapada Taluka, Narmada District, State of Gujarat, India

Narendra Vasava, Atul Vasava and Faiyaz had a welloiled method: offer an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) for sale for 4 to 5 million rupees (54,650 to 68,310 US\$), negotiate with the interested customer, request a deposit, and then don't give any sign of life. At least 8 people were duped and the trio earns millions rupees. This time, they were the ones who were tricked. With the help of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Animal Welfare Board of India, the Forest Department sent an agent who took an appointment with them, ostensibly to make a deal. Fifteen Indian sand boas were seized during the arrest.

Givin, September 11, 2020; The Times of India, September 12, 2020.²⁵

September 12, 2020 Kasta, Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



Sandeep was arrested. He was waiting for his client at the foot of a tree with an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) in a bucket.

Live Hindustan, September 12, 2020; NewsTrack, September 14, 2020.²⁶



September 12, 2020 Bannakhera, Udam Singh Nagar District, State of Uttarakhand, India

Arrest of a man accused of killing a python (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II). He had gone to graze his herd in the forest and the snake is said to have attacked a goat.

Hindustan Times, September 14, 2020.27



TURKEY

Mid-September 2020

Istanbul, Istanbul Province, Marmara Region, Turkey

Arrest of one Jordanian and one Egyptian. They were trying to sell on social networks 6 pythons (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), one 4.17 m long, one 3 m long, one 1 m long and 3 50 cm long. They were seized at their homes.

Sabah, September 10, 2020; Wild at Life, September 13, 2020.²⁸



WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

August 29, 2020

Savigny-le-Sec, Department of Côte-d'Or, France

A dozen dead snakes were found in the forest by teenage girls. Among them were royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*). When notified, the gendarmes did not open an investigation and did not inform the French Biodiversity Office. Another abandonment during the summer holidays. Bien Public, September 7, 2020.²⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS

September 1st, 2020 Grasse, Department of Alpes Maritimes, France



The couple detained 14 venomous snakes without authorisation, including an Eastern green mamba (*Dendroaspis angusticeps*), a Gaboon viper (*Bitis gabonica*), Asian pit vipers and bush vipers (genus *Atheris*). A search was carried out on July 30, 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°26 p.29), after the interception in September 2018 in Leipzig, Germany, of parcels bound for Antibes and coming from the Philippines containing North Philippine temple pitvipers (*Tropidolaemus subannulatus*). The man was sentenced to 18 months in prison and a 10,000 \in (11,915 US\$) suspended fine and the woman to a 3,000 \in (3,574 US\$) suspended fine. French Biodiversity Office, October 7, 2020. ³⁰



Green mamba, Dendroaspis angusticeps

Iguanas, Monitor Lizards, Geckos, Skinks ...



Basiliscus plumifrons. Photo Steven Easley

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

OPERATION SOUNDS OF SILENCE September 22, 2020 State of Florida, United States of America



Sentencing of Akbar Akram to 4 years probation, 90 days home detention and 288 hours of community service for importing 20 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) from the Philippines during 2016. The monitor lizards were confined in socks and hidden in electronic hardware. He had pleaded guilty on January 8, 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.35). His accomplice who received them has already been sentenced to 24 months probation.

US Department of Justice, September 22, 2020.1

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

August 7, 2020

Coronel Fabriciano, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil Arrest of a 33-year-old man in possession of 2 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II). They are thought to have been delivered by post and to have come from Sao Paulo. The suspect wanted to take them to Ipatinga, 15 km from Coronel Fabriciano. G1, August 7, 2020.²

MEXICO

August 20, 2020 Greater Mexico City, Mexico

Handing over of a "dragoncito", local name for the lizard *Abronia* spp. (Appendix I or II). An individual reportedly found it in his garden. It is in good health and has been handed over to an UMA (Unidad de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre). Profepa, August 20, 2020.³

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

August 5, 2020

Nantou, Guangdong Province, China

Arrest and release on bail of a man who bought 2 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calyptratus*, Appendix II) "out of curiosity" for the equivalent of 145 US\$. Xxcb.cn, September 9, 2020.⁴

August 21, 2020 Hengban, Guangdong Province, China



Arrest of an individual who bought 2 two-banded monitors (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II) from a pet shop for the equivalent of 340 US\$. Having been informed that his supplier had been arrested by the police and that these lizards are protected by law and must not be put on the market, he wanted to get rid of them and offered them for sale on the Internet.

Xxcb.cn, September 9, 2020.⁵

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

REPEATED OFFENSE August 23, 2020 Between Banyak Islands, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province and Nias Island, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Following a whistle-blowing call, arrest of traffickers on board the *Teluk Singkil* ferry. Seizure of 30 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). They were on



their way to Nias Island. They were released on Sikandang Island. One of the traffickers, Sabarudin, admitted that this was not the first time he had been engaged in trafficking. One kg of monitor lizard meat, or biawak as it is locally known, sells for 5,000 Indonesian rupiahs or 0.34 US\$.

Media Realitas, August 24, 2020; @eljohn88, August 25, 2020.⁶

MALAYSIA

September 15, 2020 Jalan Tanjung Masai, State of Johor, Malaysia Seizure of two-banded monitor meat (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II) in a restaurant freezer. New Straits Times, September 17, 2020.⁷

PHILIPPINES

July 23, 2020 Pasay, National Capital Region, Philippines



Sentencing of Neil Ryana Dysoco to 3 months in prison and a fine of 20,000

pesos (400 US\$). He had been arrested in February 2019 at Ninoy-Aquino International Airport. Coming from Bangkok, he was in possession of 63 reptiles: 54 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), 2 basilisks (genus *Basiliscus*), 4 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calyptratus*, Appendix II) and 3 bearded dragons (genus *Pogona*). See "On the Trail" n°24 p.28. UNTV, July 23, 2020; Manila Bulletin, July 22, 2020. ⁸

September 7, 2020 Lubao, Province of Pampanga, Philippines



Ariel Torres and Daniel Sioco were arrested. They were trying to sell 11 marbled water monitors (*Varanus marmoratus*, Appendix II). The bayawak (local name), endemic to the Philippines, are appreciated as pets as well as on the plates. They were offered for sale at 400-700 pesos per specimen (8-14.5 US\$). The suspects had caught them at a waterhole in the city and in the neighbouring province of Bataan. The lizards were taken to the wildlife rescue centre in Clark (Central Luzon region). They will not be released as their teeth were removed by the traffickers.

Rappler, September 9, 2020; The SunStar, September 10, 2020.⁹

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 11, 2020 Papannapet, Medak District, State of Telangana, India



A young man was roasting a Bengal 🌑 monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*,

Appendix I) alive. His exploit was posted on Instagram. He was arrested. His 2 customers can be heard during the video but the roaster says he cannot identify them because they were wearing Covid-19 face masks.

The Times of India, July 12, 2020.¹⁰

FAMILY AFFAIRS

August 23, 2020

Devarmalai, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

P. Madesh, his brother P. Chinnapaiyan and their buddy K. Madevan had been captured by surveillance cameras in the Burgur forest while poaching Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) and a chevrotain (family Tragulidae). The forest guards who came to their village did not find the remains, but Madesh and Madevan confessed to their misdeeds. Chinnapaiyan took to his heels.

The Times of India, August 24, 2020.¹¹

FAMILY AFFAIRS

August 27, 2020

Desert National Park, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India

Six arrests: Kanaran Bhil, Nemaram Bhil, Devaram Bhil, Rewaram Bhil, Langaram Bhil and Berasiram Bhil. Together they had poached 23 Hardwick's spiny-tailed lizards (*Saara hardwickii*, Appendix II). They were taken into custody for 15 days and their bail application was refused. The spiny-tailed lizards were rescued and the weapons and poaching equipment were seized. Spiny-tailed lizards, known locally as sanda, are on the verge of extinction. They are poached for their oil, which is sold in India and abroad. It is said to have aphrodisiac properties. The Times of India, August 28, 2020.¹²

August 29, 2020

Agapur, North Goa District, State of Goa, India

Arrest of 6 poachers: a 15-year-old minor, Pedru Roque Xavier, 52 years old, Martin Josemary Silveira, 62 years old, Nazareth Roque Xavier, 42 years old, Agnelo Caitano Gama, 30 years old and Francisco Salvador Colaco, 32 years old. Seizure of 3 dead Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), weapons and a canoe used to cross the Zuari River. The blood of Bengal monitor lizards is also said to cure asthma. The poachers intended to sell the skins too. The gang had a dog specially trained to hunt monitor lizards.

The Times of India, August 30 and September 11, 2020.¹³

September 9, 2020

Pargumti, North 24 Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India. India-Bangladesh Border.

Seizure of 14 live tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) in a plastic bag. The suspect managed to escape. The geckos were handed over to the Forest Department. The deputy inspector-general of borders notes that this is an unusual case: "Usually smuggling of tokay geckos are reported from India to other countries".

Outlook India, September 9, 2020; The Hindu, September 10, 2020.¹⁴

September 17, 2020

Kankarbagh, Patna District, State of Bihar, India



Seizure of a tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) with an estimated economic value of 250,000 rupees (3,415 US\$).

Two suspects were arrested in rooms 202 and 203 of the city hotel by the authorities. One is from the State of West Bengal, the other from Katihar district in Bihar. The gecko tokay was from West Bengal. It was going to be sold to a middleman. Bihar is a smuggling route to Nepal or Myanmar and then to China or other south-eastern asian countries.

The tokay gecko is victim of its legend. As a pet, it is said to bring fertility and good fortune. A presumed descendant of dragons, the "Ge Jie" processed into powder is said to cure cancer and respiratory diseases. Charlatan drugs based on gecko tokay are popular in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Viet Nam and Singapore.

The New Indian Express, September 18, 2020; The Times of India, September 20, 2020.¹⁵

September 18, 2020

Tendukheda, Damoh District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of 3 dead Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) at Suresh Dolanath's home. Seven accomplices are wanted. The gang was engaged in poaching and reselling meat and organs.

Outlook India based on Press Trust of India, September 19, 2020.¹⁶

September 20, 2020 Tatodi, South Goa District, State of Goa, India

© The Navhind Times

Arrest of Sada Gaonkar, Geetesh Gaonkar, Bhanudas Gaudo, Rajeshwar Gaonkar, Suresh Gaonkar and Madhu Gaonkar. They are accused of killing at least 2 to 3 monitor lizards, one of which was of good size. A forest agent had spotted a group of suspects in the forest with a dog around 3.30 pm. They fled on foot and on motorbikes as he approached. At 8pm, after finding the owners of the vehicles, the agents searched their homes. Three kg of Bengal monitor lizard meat (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) were found in each of the houses, for a total of 9 kg. What happened to the skins remains a mystery.

The Navhind Times, September 22, 2020 ; Herald Goa, September 22, 2020.¹⁷

September 26, 2020 Bogamati, Baksa District, State of Assam, India. Inde-Bhutan Border.

Two men were carrying 2 tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) in a bag. Their smuggling attempt failed thanks to to the intervention of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) border guards. The suspects managed to escape by going into the jungle without their bags. The geckos, threaded inside a bamboo tube, were handed over to the forest department for release.

Sentinel Assam, September 26, 2020.18

September 28 or 29, 2020 Around Teliparamore, Hooghly District, State of West Bengal, India

The patrol was joint but the dates of the seizure differ. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), rangers from Binnaguri station and paramilitaries from the SSB's 'Falakata' battalion arrested 2 people holding 5 tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II). WCCB, September 30, 2020 ; SSB, September 28, 2020.¹⁹



SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

Early July 2020 Vitoria-Gasteiz, Province of Alava, Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, Spain



Faced with a restless parcel, officially containing crickets bound for the province of Cadiz, the employees of a logistics platform contact the Seprona. A young Nile monitor (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II) is found inside. Its legs are tied off. It has been wrapped in cloth for several days. According to the vets, its chances of survival are very slight. It is entrusted to the care of the Karpin Fauna wildlife shelter in the Carranza Valley. The sender is under investigation for trafficking in endangered species and animal abuse.

Gasteiz Berri, July 4, 2020.20

July 25, 2020

San Cristóbal de La Laguna, Province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

A 60-year-old man throws 5 dead lizards into a pond. Alerted by witnesses, Seprona agents identified the victims as Gallot's lizards (*Gallotia galloti*). These black lizards are a protected species endemic to the island of Tenerife.

El Día, August 13, 2020.²¹



Gallot's lizard, Gallotia galloti



AUSTRALIA

End of July 2020 Brisbane Airport, State of Queensland, Australia



X-rays detect strange shadows in brand new rice cookers bound for China. Post

staff alert the authorities. Inside, they find 78 live juvenile lizards: bearded dragons (genus *Pogona*), blue-tongued skinks (genus *Tiliqua*) including shingleback lizards (*Tiliqua rugosa*) and species unknown to scientists. They were confined in socks or rags, their legs tied up by rubber bands and without food or water. Their ecological value is inestimable and their economic value is estimated at between 750,000 and 1 million A\$ (between 515,848 and 687,797 US\$). Warren Christensen of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service explains that these endemic lizards are highly sought after on the black market.

A 28-year-old Taiwanese man was arrested and charged with 67 offences, including aggravated cruelty to animals. He was sentenced to 6 months in prison and deported.

The lizards will not be released for health reasons. They will be used in breeding programmes or to raise public awareness about the illegal wildlife trade.

Six similar smuggling attempts have already been foiled in Brisbane in 2018 and 2019. See "On the Trail" n°25 p.34.

Brisbane Times, July 24, 2020 ; ABC News, July 23, 2020 ; Redland City Bulletin, July 24,2020.²²









Central bearded dragon (Pogona vitticeps)

CROCODILES AND **A**LLIGATORS

AFRICA

KENYA

Early September 2020 Eresa Boru, Isiolo County, Kenya

It is hot. The trees start flowering. Bees abound, rain is imminent. The fauna is satisfied with the living conditions. Conflicts with human activities are rare except that 2 crocodiles carried by the last floods have settled for a few months in the multipurpose water reserve of the village. The rangers tried to capture them by



deploying a weighted net across the water point. On several occasions, the 2 damned crocodiles managed to escape through the too large mesh. It is impossible to dry out the reserve. It is essential for the inhabitants and the domestic animals. The nearest spring is 4 km away. A small-meshed net is being prepared. In the meantime, the village chief invites his citizens to be careful. To prevent the small but voracious crocodiles from attacking the donkeys that come to drink - which so far has not had any fatal consequences - it is strongly advised to slap the water with sticks before approaching it. SWT/KWS, September 2020.¹

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

September 5, 2020 Avoyelles Parish, State of Louisiana, United States of America

Corey Cooley shot 3 American alligators (Alligator mississippiensis, Appendix II) near Grassy Lake with a 20 gauge shotgun. He was accompanied by Jonathan Deville. The butchered carcasses were found at their home in Center Point. The meat was seized and both men were arrested and charged with unlawful possession of alligators, violation of wildlife management area regulations and concealment of wildlife. Deville is also charged with hunting without a license. Kalb, September 8, 2020.²

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

July 29, 2020 Novo Gama, State of Goiás, Brazil



Following an anonymous call, a man was arrested for confining a caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II). The reptile was entrusted to the Ibama. Portal do Holanda, July 29, 2020.³

End of August 2020

Charqueada, State of São Paulo, Brazil

A man was beating a caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II) with a stick in Lake Biris. The video on social networks



caused outrage. The police identified the suspect. According to him, it was a "joke", the animal was already dead and had a hook stuck in its throat. Conviction to a fine of 6,500 R\$ (1,180 US\$) for mistreating and killing a wild animal. G1, August 25, 2020.⁴

September 7, 2020

Madeira River, Porto Velho, State of Rondonia, Brazil

A black caiman (Melanosuchus niger, Appendix II) is the victim of a surge of violence. While one person shoots at it with a gun, another person is beating it with a club again and again after pulling it to the riverbank. The suspects were filmed from behind and were not identified. At the scene, the environmental police found the carcass of the caiman, the club and a knife. G1, September 9, 2020.⁵



Mid-September 2020

Amambaí River, Naviraí, State of Mato Grosso del Sul, Brazil

Rescue of a 1.5 m long broad-nosed caiman (Caiman latirostris, Appendix II) that had bitten a hook. It was patiently freed by the police, treated by a veterinarian, and then released into a part of the river further away from the city. Olhar Animal, September 16, 2020.6

MEXICO

Early August 2020 Tonalá River, Mexico

Pemex, king of the Mexican oil, claims to support fishermen. At the same time, Pemex is closing fishing areas in the Gulf of Mexico around the offshore platforms and the noise caused by the oil traffic is scaring away the fish. The fishermen have not received any help from the government since the Covid-19 lockdown began. As a result, in the Tonalá River, illegal fishing is spreading. For lack of fish, fishermen catch juvenile Morelet's crocodiles (Crocodylus moreletii, Appendix II). Presencia, August 11, 2020.7

September 24, 2020 Navolato, State of Sinaloa, Mexico

Police are investigating the capture of a 2.5m long American crocodile (Crocodvlus acutus, Appendix II). The poacher distinguished himself by carrying the animal on his motorbike, sitting on its neck while the tail was dragging on the bitumen. Olhar Animal, September 29, 2020.⁸



ASIA

CHINA

July 8, 2020 Qingdao Liuting Airport, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 6 belts and 2 purses made of crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) tanned leather in the luggage of passengers coming from abroad. Chinese Customs, July 14, 2020.9

INDIA

July 2, 2020 Kaladapalli, Malkangiri District, State of Odisha, India

People spot a mugger crocodile (Crocodylus palustris, Appendix I) in the Sabari River, a tributary of the Godavari. ...



... They think they have found the responsible for the disappearance of some domestic animals. They capture it, bring it back to the village and hang it from a tamarind tree. Hundreds of people flock to see it and take pictures with it. It is cut up, its meat shared and a festive dinner is organised. Hindustan Times, July 2, 2020 ; India Today, July 3, 2020; The New Indian Express, July 3, 2020.10

MALAYSIA

July 18, 2020

Near Kampung Tg Sapi, State of Sabah, Malaysia A crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) of 350 kg and 4 m in length has been trapped. It reportedly killed at least 2 people in Kalabakan: Nur Hayati Talib on June 25 and Sukrien Jesman Yusoff on July 3. Wildlife officers had set several traps for it between July 5 and 15. "There were human hands in its stomach, and they have been returned to the identified family" said officer Sailun Aris. The circumstances that led to the human-crocodile confrontation are not known. Daily Express, June 20, 2020.11

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

July 2, 2020 Brisbane, State of Queensland, Australia

A young salt-water crocodile (Crocodylus porosus, Appendix II), approximately one year old and 40 cm long, was wandering near 7th Brigade Park, 80 m from a creek.



An individual handed it over to the authorities. According to Mr Christensen of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, " the most probable scenario is the crocodile was probably taken from Northern Territory, where you can actually purchase them, and then illegally brought into Queensland." Its chances of survival are reduced because of its state of dehydratation. It has been handed over to Moggill conservation park for treatment. Mirage News, July 2, 2020.¹²

Early September 2020

Perth Airport, State of Western Australia, Australia

A woman had purchased an alligator (Alligator spp., Appendix I or II) leather bag signed Saint Laurent in France. She had obtained a CITES export permit. However, she had "forgotten" the import permit. She paid a high price for it: her bag was seized and destroyed on arrival. She escaped a fine. «Aside from the rules themselves, it is important that people take the time to think about ethical fashion choices," says Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley.

The Sidney Morning Herald, September 3, 2020.¹³

DENDROBATES AND OTHER **A**MPHIBIANS



ZIMBABWE

August 2020

Chimanimani National Park, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe

"For the past couple of years, we have been seeing illegal gold miners in the mountains, but suddenly during lockdown we started to see hundreds of them," said the vice chairman of the Chimanimani Tourist Association.

It is a gold rush in the park. It is attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic and also to the still deteriorating economic conditions in Zimbabwe. The Bundi River is polluted by gold diggers. Running down from the mountains, it used to be clear. Now it looks like coffee.



According to the Chimanimani Tourist Association, 2,000 intruders entered the park illegally in July. They wash and rewash the sand and sediment dredged in the river bottom or on the banks to concentrate the mythical and improbable flakes. The country folk is speaking of an invasion. Some of the rangers are accomplices. They buy the gold from the gold diggers in batches of 40g and pay them in dollars. The social fabric is torn and the ecosystem threatened. The rock drawings are covered with graffiti. The gold diggers cut down trees in order to cook and warm up. Even the endemic Chimanimani miracle berry (Synsepalum chimanimani) are cut down. The immediate victims are the cave squeakers Arthroleptis troglodytes, frogs reported extinct about 50 years ago but recorded again in small colonies since 2016.

Spotlight Zimbabwe, September 2, 2020; Chimanimani Tourist Association, September 7, 2020; New Zimbabwe, September 9 and October 12, 2020.¹ LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

September 16, 2020 Bay Lake, State of Florida, United States of America - São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil



At the end of 2017, a shipment of splashbacked poison frogs (*Adelphobates galactonotus*, Appendix II) had been seized at Miami airport. Among them, 22 were blue, a coloration discovered in 2012 in the Caxiuanã forest triggering a fashionmania and an international demand. The other small poison frogs were orange or red. As the Ibama had never authorised the export of blue splash-backed poison frogs, US Fish and Wildlife officials were not convinced by the CITES permits presented and they contacted their Brazilian counterparts. The frogs had in fact been illegally caught, exported to Europe, and reshipped to the United States with false papers.

The frogs were taken into the care of Disney's Animal Kingdom in Bay Lake. After 3 years of care and discussions with Brazil, 21 splash-backed poison frogs (19 blue and 2 orange) were repatriated to Brazil. They will now live in the São Paulo Zoo.

Some indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin rub their arrows on splash-backed poison frogs to coat them with poison, hence their nickname "poisondart frogs".

Olhar Animal, September 17, 2020; US Fish and Wildlife Service, "Fish and Wildlife News ", Winter 2021.²



Adelphobates galactonotus from the biopiracy for sale online on a French website 89€



CHINA

July 15, 2020

Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China Seizure of 9 "horned" frogs (genus *Ceratophrys*) from South America in a postal parcel, stashed in an opaque plastic box. Chinese Customs, July 20, 2020.³



August 1st, 2020

Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, Chine

"Horned" frogs (genus *Ceratophrys*) always arrive in sets of 9. They were "plastic toys" according to the shipping receipt. In China, customs officers at postal sorting centres are suspicious of toys ... and milk tins.

Chinese Customs, August 17, 2020.4





WESTERN ASIA

ISRAEL

August 9, 2020 Israel

Seizure of hundreds of frogs of African origin from a shoe repair shop that was masking its amphibian tanks behind back door. The Jerusalem Post, August 11, 2020.⁵



Cranwell's horned frog, Ceratophrys cranwelli

BUTTERFLIES, PRAYING MANTISES, ANTS, BEETLES AND TARANTULAS

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

End of August 2020 Fontibón, 9th district of Bogotá, Colombia



Seizure of 511 stuffed butterflies (order Lepidoptera) of 15 different species and 55 pupae arriving from Otanchu in the department of Boyacá. They were destined for export by air to North America, Asia or Europe.

Semana Sostenible, August 28, 2020.1

ASIA

CHINA

July 23 and August 24, 2020 Shenzhen postal sorting centre, Guangdong Province, China

- Seizure of live praying mantises (*Idolomantis diabolica*) in a "box of sweets" and in a "box of biscuits" from abroad.

- Seizure of 35 ants of the genus *Pogonomyrmex* in a parcel of "Lego toys" from abroad, each of which was threaded in test tubes wrapped in metal sheets in an attempt to deceive the eyes of the X-rays. Chinese Customs, July 24 and August 27, 2020.²





Mid-August 2020 Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China Seizure of 2 live and giant beetles (superfamily Scarabaeoidea) in a "clothing" package from Japan. Each weighs about 100 g. Chinese Customs, August 17, 2020.³

September 11, 2020 Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China



Seizure of 9 rhinoceros beetles in a parcel from Japan: Japanese rhinoceros beetles (Trypoxylus dichotomus) and Hercules beetles (Dynastes hercules). They were each in a small plastic box filled with bedding. Male Hercules beetles can measure up to 17 cm long with their horns. The Japanese rhinoceros beetles, which have a smaller horn, are between 4 and 8 cm in length.

Mp.weixin.qq.com, October 3, 2020.4

EUROPE

FRANCE

July 7, 2020 Montreuil-Juigné, Department of Maine-et-Loire, France

He was trying to sell a tarantula on the online site "Le bon coin", the most famous online bric-a-brac in France. The gendarmerie and the OFB (French Biodiversity Office) raided his home. The spider was seized and the man was thrown in jail for insulting law enforcement officials.

Le Courrier de l'Ouest, July 8, 2020.⁵

September 1st, 2020 Tarbes, Department of Hautes-Pyrénées, France

Cyrille P. kept 10,000 insects, including butterflies (order Lepidoptera) and



beetles (order Coleoptera), in particuliar specimens of the largest diving beetle (Dytiscus latissimus), a European beetle highly endangered in France. He caught them or bought them on E-bay from sellers around the world. He was fined 1,000€ (1,170 US\$). He must also pay 200€ (234US\$) in damages and legal fees to the France Nature Environnement Midi-Pyrénées association and its branch in the Hautes-Pyrénées. His collection was seized.

In February 2019, 221 butterflies had been seized in the Occitanie region during the Satanas operation (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 33).

20 minutes, September 3, 2020; La Semaine des Pyrénées, September 3, 2020.6



Dytiscus latissimus



Japanese rhinoceros beetle (Trypoxylus dichotomus)

PANDEMIC OF BIG POLLUTING PROJECTS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

End of September 2020 - January 2021 From Olifants River to Alexander Bay and near Lutzville, Western Cape province, South Africa

When the beaches become a mine

It is the "Far West" of the South Atlantic, beaten by the winds and the waves, irrigated by

the Benguela currents, colonised by sea lions, sea birds and fish. It is perhaps the most productive ecosystem on this planet. The Olifants river mouth and of the other coastal rivers, the cold water from the ocean depths and the sunny surface water merge and produce plankton galore.

In the sea there are sharks, kelp in the coves, crabs, rays chasing sole, sea cucumbers grazing sand and on the foreshore there are the famous Tylos granulatus digging their burrows to protect themselves against the attacks of the white-fronted plovers (Charadrius marginatus). In the dunes, there are caracals (Caracal caracal, Appendix II), Cape clawless otters (Aonyx capensis, Appendix II), steenboks (Raphicerus campestris), bat-eared foxes (Otocyon megalotis) and meerkats (Suricata suricatta) who hide behind agaves and amaryllis.

Mineral Commodities

It is on this fertile ocean front that the extractive industry is bustling, digging, excavating, with an army of mechanical diggers, dumpers and tow trucks. The Australian company Mineral Commodities, and its South African subsidiary Mineral Sands Resources, are at work. The beaches are privatised by the industry. The foreshore is theirs. Sand is rich in titanium and zirconium. The Australian industrial mole who already is sucking up 15 km of beach wants 60 km more, a simple extension, it says, that can free itself from an analysis of the cumulative impacts on the marine and terrestrial environment. Barbara Creecy, the Minister of Ecology, did not say no. The South African government is also considering the construction of a mega port for giant ore carriers further north, in a bay in the area of Port Nolloth, 100 km from the border with Namibia. In a business release at the end of May 2021, Mineral Commodities triumphs and baits the shareholders: "Mineral Commodities unearths more high-grade sands in South Africa" and the company does not beat around the bush. Between high and low tide, the exploitable sand slice goes down to a depth of 31 m over 60 km. That would be a nice stash of dollars and a disfigured coastline.

The NGO Protect the West Coast (PTWC) and Cape Town academics are trying to stop the destruction machine. " Mining on beaches and in the nearshore zone can result in imbalances in sediments, cliff collapses and the deposition of terrestrial material into the water column, which can affect filter feeders and other pelagic species, undermining the fishing industry," summarises the Daily Maverick after consulting the defenders of the ocean. Access to beaches already used for mining is prohibited, and eminent surfers who venture here can no longer ride the waves that break every 10 to 15 seconds.

Daily Maverick, November 12, 2020, and January 9, 2021; The West Australian, May 26, 2021; SRK Consulting, Extension of Tormin Mine, West Coast, South Africa, Reports Number 507228/2 and 507228/1A, April 2017 and April 2018.1







CAMEROON

July 20-August 11, 2020 Ebo Forest, Littoral Region, Cameroon

On July 20, 2020, the government enacted the law n°2020/006 that is making official Cameroon's accession to the Agreement on the conservation of gorillas and their habitats, adopted in Paris (France) on October 26, 2007. Two days later, the same government authorised by decree the opening of a logging concession within the Ebo forest. According to the IUCN, this protected area of more than 1,500 km² is "a globally important site" for gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I), but also for chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I). The last report of Preuss's red colobus (*Piliocolobus preussi*, Appendix II) in the Ebo Forest was in 2012, but a few families could be surviving today. Bethan Morgan, head of the San Diego Zoo Global's Central Africa Program, agrees: "This forest and its resources are the lifeblood of local people who have worked so hard to conserve the unique population of gorillas and their habitat over the past decades". Faced with the rise of protests, the Prime Minister, head of government, "on the very high instructions of the President of the Republic", suspended the decree authorising the concession. This is positive news, but the situation remains worrying because it's only a suspension. According to Greenpeace, the partial exploitation of the Ebo forest has been attributed for a while to the Sextransbois company. In appearance Cameroonian, it is allegedly behind the scenes held by Asian industrialists according to the document "Mapping of Sino-Asian Investments In Cameroon's Forestry Sector: Operators And Flow Trends" (DFID/WWF). In the Ebo Forest, there are also elephants and grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I).

Greenpeace Africa, July 23, 2020; Value Walk, July 27, 2020; Mongabay, August 14, 2020.²

September 12, 2020

Near Campo Ma'an National Park, South Region, Cameroon

Camvert is reportedly trying to buy the consent of the Bagyeli, a semi-nomadic tribe, with cans of tomatoes, bags of rice and soap to clear the buffer zone of the national park where chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I), mandrills

(*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) and other species reside, and convert it into an oil palm plantation. Canvert has already obtained a clear-cutting permit for 2,500 ha. The company targets a total of 60,000 ha. The Bantu, whose cultivable land is also threatened, denounce a bogus consultation process and the widespread corruption of village chiefs. They also complain about the ransacking of their fields by elephants whose migration corridors have been disturbed by the first clearing.

Camvert is run by Aboubakar al Fatih, who has some support in the majority political party and is said to have links with Sextransbois, whose permit to exploit the Ebo forest has just been suspended. The opponents of the project are described by the media as "enemies of the Republic" and as the "gravediggers of the Great Opportunities Plan" promoted by the President of Cameroon. Among these gravediggers is the NGO Green Development Advocates (DGA). According to DGA, the authorities must be sanctioned for having allowed a project to go ahead, which is violating national and international provisions and undermining communities' access to non-timber forest products on their land.

Greenpeace, September 28, 2020; Forest Peoples Programme, Octobre 29, 2020.³

KENYA

July 23-25, 2020 Base Titanium, Kwale County, Kenya

Base Titanium is a subsidiary of the Australian group Base Resources. The mining operation of these sands rich in minerals, particularly titanium dioxide, began about ten years ago. The sands are exported via the ore port of Likoni. Over the years, the Gogoni forest has been gobbled up and the buffaloes have become undesirable. They approach human activities and the Base Titanium workers' housing estate. They damage the tailings dam of the mine. They risk being turned into bushmeat. The farmers are also protesting against their incursions. Nine of them have been exfiltrated. After anaesthesia, loading inside trucks with the mine's backhoes, they were trucked 3 h away and released, apparently safe and sound, near Aruba in the east of Tsavo park. SWT/KWS, July 2020.⁴





September 3-18, 2020 Kimana Corridor, Kajiado Coutny, Kenya The avocados/elephants conflict.

KiliAvo Fresh Limited cleared about 100 hectares of savannah in a few days. The red, bare land has been severely fenced off. A real prison. The avocados will not be able to escape and avocado thieves will not be able to enter. The avocado business makes the fortune of a few big opportunistic investors so far specialised in industrial flowers grown under greenhouse and insecticides. The avocado market is exploding. It is all the more promising since Kenya and China signed a trade agreement 2 years ago. Guacamole and raw avocado have become a food of choice for the Chinese.

KiliAvo Fresh Limited chose to locate its army of avocado trees in the Kimana corridor, which allows elephants, gazelles and giraffes to move between the Amboseli and



Tsavo parks. The promoters bought the plots from leading ones who are not far from local or Nairobi's political circles.

Very soon, protests flourished from part of the local population, from all those who live from tourism and protect the attractiveness of this world heritage site. They want to keep the Unesco label and are making a fool of the Avocado label. The KWS gets mixed up in it and Patrick Omondi, its acting Director of biodiversity, research and planning, regrets in the Sunday Nation that the licensing process to allow an industrial plantation to KiliAvo Fresh Limited was circumvented. The Nema (National Environment Management Authority) did not consult the KWS, whose opinion on such projects is both useful and required. "If we had been consulted, we would not have approved it because it is an elephant dispersal area." "Allowing a plantation inside a park would have made the corridor a human-wildlife conflict hotspot" says Omondi.

The Nema recognises that the permit was granted in haste and, above all, in ignorance of critical information that was missing from KiliAvo Fresh Limited's file. Two weeks after the clearing and fencing, the Nema ordered a suspension of work and gave the investors 10 days to build a file in response and provide evidence that the project will not interfere with wildlife movements.

On April 26, 2021, the NET (National Environment Tribunal), after several months of hearings, dismissed KiliAvo Fresh Limited's appeal and said that the license is incompatible with the vocation of the Kimana corridor, which by law is solely dedicated to the paths of wildlife and herds of Maasai herders.

On April 27, the Nema definitively revoked the permit granted to KiliAvo Fresh Limited.

One should not deny his pleasure about these decisions, but at the same time one should remain vigilant. In Kenya, as elsewhere, buried projects are sometimes unearthed with a few cosmetic changes.

Big Life Foundation, September 24, December 6, 2020, and April 26, 2021; Nation, october 4, 2020; Al Jazeera, December 4, 2020; Africa Geographic, May 6, 2021; Mongabay, May 6, 2021.⁵

UGANDA AND TANZANIA

September 10, 2020 Murchison Falls National Park, Gulu and Masindi Districts and shores of Lake Albert, Uganda and Tanzania They want to Total Murchison Falls

While Total is kissing the greens by engaging in offshore wind power in the Channel Sea off



TotalEnergies

France, it is beginning to muck up the sources of the Nile and Lake Albert in Uganda and cutting through 1,500 km of savannah and 35 rivers to lay a pipeline that will end at the Tanzanian port of Tanga and fill tankers bound for China. CNOOC (China National Offshore Oil Corporation) is involved in the project. The oil deposit on the boundaries of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan, where several rebel groups are on a murderous and poaching hideout, was discovered and quantified by Tullow Oil, the British oil sniffer. It is estimated that there will be at least 30 years' worth of oil at a rate of 210,000 barrels per day, or 33,390 tonnes. Solar panels are said to produce the power needed for the warming up of the pipeline, as oil from Lake Albert requires a minimum temperature of 50°C to be transported.



Initial clearing and civil works have been entrusted to the Portuguese public works group Mota- PROJEC Engil. The Ugandan press reports that the President of the French Republic, at the forefront

of the fight against global warming, expressed his support in May 2021. He wrote to his Ugandan counterpart that this project is " a major opportunity to intensify trade between our 2 countries and to further expand our cooperation."

Everything is just hunky-dory in the World. Total has started to distribute financial compensation to thousands of families and farmers forced to give their land and homes away. They are so paltry that their amount is not disclosed.

... Total will fund a black rhino reintroduction programme in Uganda and work hand-in-hand with IUCN to ensure that compensatory measures are granted to chimpanzees for the destruction of their habitats. In Murchison Falls national park, Total and CNOOC have reduced the number of wells to a dozen. They committed themselves to remove all waste and to reduce as much as possible the noise from the drilling, pumps and compressors so as not to disturb the nightlife of the raptors, monkeys, leopards and pangolins, and to respect the rest of the giraffes and lions and the visitors who come from all over the world to see the elephants. Now they will benefit fom a documentary about oil and, as a bonus, a documentary about wildlife at Murchison Falls park.

Elly Munguryeki, a father of 6, sees baboons, hippos and buffaloes coming out of Murchison Falls, pushed out by the din of drilling and the earth-moving of industrial tracks. Because of oil, farmers and experts in animal behaviour fear that conflicts between humans and wildlife will become inextricable.

Total is making a major strategic mistake by trying to plunge its pipes and roots in East Africa. Beast are not alone to fall into traps. For Total, East Africa might look like the Burma fiasco.

VOA Afrique from AFP, September 10, 2020; International Federation for Human Rights, September 10, 2020; Reporterre, October 29, 2020; La Croix, April 23, 2021; Reuters, March 8, 2021; Total, Tilenga and EACOP: acting transparently (last accessed July 5, 2021); The Independent, March 15 and May 20, 2021; Agence D'Information d'Afrique Centrale, March 18, 2021; Mongabay, April 19, 2021; Mail & Guardian, May 1st, 2021; Newsday, May 21, 2021.⁶

ZIMBABWE

September 2020

Hwange National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe They heap coals of fire on elephant's head



Shameless and unabashed, the coal trackers set their sights on Hwange national park, which despite cyanide poisoning and other poaching incidents remains a natural reservoir of elephants, giraffes, African wild dogs, panthers, buffaloes and rhinos.

Zhongxin Coal Mining Group and Afrochine Energy have been granted the permit to prospect and explore for black seams in the park's subsoil. The consulting firm SustiGlobal, which is accompanying the industrialists in their approach, is trying to defuse the protests that have been quick to arise. "The proposals are only for exploration." "The boreholes will tell us where the mineral is and determine what kind of mine and what quantities." After that, we will wait for permission from the ministry before drilling."

It is not by chance that coal exploration is focused on the park, which covers an area of 3,840 km². The project has been in the drawers for several years.

Outside the park, on the outskirts of the town of Hwange, several open-pit coal mines are being operated by Chinese interests. A spokesman for the Bhejane Trust, which defends the interests of wildlife and the tourism industry, says that the air in Hwange (33,210 inhabitants) is as polluted or even more so than in Harare (1.54 million inhabitants). Protests from residents complaining about dirty air and water next to coal mines and slag heaps are increasing. Faced with the haste of industrialists who confuse sounding with drilling and set up camps inside the park, the Zela (Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association) and Fedelis Chima, a resident of the park, have taken legal action, while NGOs have sounded the alarm among the public.

On September 8, 2020, following a council of ministers, the government spokesperson announced the immediate suspension of all mining permits inside the national parks and along the rivers. The decision concerns both coal and gold mines. While welcoming this proclamation, NGOs and a section of the population would like to see it set in stone and stated explicitly in law. For their part, the Chinese mining companies, reinforced by the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC), have taken the matter to the High Court of Justice and are challenging the legality and scope of the government's announcement. The President of Zimbabwe is relying on coal to supply thermal power stations and generate the electricity needed for the nation's social and economic development.

Pindula News, September 2, 2020; The Guardian, September 3, 2020; Quartz Africa, September 3, 2020; Dispatch Live, September 7, 2020; Daily Maverick from Reuters, September 8, 2020; Global March for Elephants and Rhinos, September 8, 2020; 263Chat.com, September 8, 2020; BBC, September 9, 2020; New Zimbabwe, September 15, 16 and December 13, 2020; ZBC News, September 8, 2020.⁷

BOTSWANA / NAMIBIA

See "On the Trail" n°28 p. 104,"They want to turn the Okavango delta into the Texas of Southern Africa"





INDONESIA

July 2020 Harapan Forest, Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia Green is turning in black

A road to convey coal from a mine to thermal power stations in the south of Sumatra island has been given the green light by the government. The coal road will run for 88 km, 30 of which will pass through the Harapan forest, a victim of over- exploitation in the 1990s. Ten years ago it was designated as an "ecosystem restoration concession", a first in Indonesia. Today, Harapan is no longer a forest concession open to chainsaws and skidders. Harapan means "hope" in the local language, a hope that is turning black for the few pygmy elephants and Sumatran tigers and the Batin Sembilan, an indigenous tribe. For decades, the forest has been eaten up by foresters, poachers and palm farmers. It was slowly recovering from these predations and now the coal road is going to cut through it, devouring 6,000 ha and facilitating the infiltration of poaching and trafficking. Work has been authorised but has not yet begun. The MBJ (PT Marga Bara Jaya) coal trust should have presented an alternative route that would circumvent Harapan at a charge of an extra cost. YLBHL (Environmental Legal Aid Foundation), together with a pool of Indonesian NGOs, still hopes to stop MBJ's first choice. Mongabay, July 13, 2020.⁸





No deforestation !

MULTI-SPECIES

Events concerning among others elephants, rhinos, felines, bears or pangolins and their by-products are indicated by these pictograms:











Cases concerning exclusively

- pangolins, rhinos and elephants: see page 15

- elephants and rhinos: see page 41

WESTERN AFRICA

SENEGAL

July 18, 2020 Kolda, Kolda Region, Senegal Seizure of one leopard skin (*Panthera*)



pardus, Appendix I), one serval skin (Leptailurus serval, Appendix II), one patas monkey skin (Erythrocebus patas, Appendix II), 3 side-striped jackal skins (Canis adustus), and 17 skins, 2 horns and 32 meat quarters of harnessed

bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*). All the animals were reportedly poached in the Niokolo-Koba national park. Three arrests. Le Quotidien, July 20, 2020.¹



CENTRAL AFRICA

ANGOLA

End of July 2020

Luengue-Luiana National Park, Cuando Cubango Province, Angola

Eleven bushmeaters were combing the park with 2 Mauser, a Kalashnikov and a pistol. They were surrounded and disarmed. 200 kg of meat were seized. All the gang was here: 2 suppliers of arms and ammunition, 7 shooters-meat cutters and 2 women in charge of marketing.

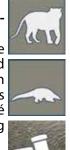
300 young people were recruited from the towns of Mavinga, Rivungo, Dirico and Cuangar to reinforce the anti-poaching squads in the Mavinga and Luengue-Luiana parks. Natural resources are assaulted by uncontrolled slash-and-burn agriculture, poaching and illegal logging for furniture, construction or trafficking in protected trees.

Jornal de Angola, July 27, 2020.²

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

July 29, 2020 - January 5, 2021 Pointe-Noire, Pointe-Noire Department, Republic of Congo

Arrest by the police of 2 men in flagrante delicto for transporting 2 leopard skins (Appendix I) and 7 kg of pangolin scales (Appendix I). The operation was strenghtened by the NGO PALF. André Mbika, the main suspect, has a strong reputation as a wildlife trafficker. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison,



He was sentenced to 18 months in prison, ordered to pay 20 million CFA francs (37,500 US\$) in damages and a fine of 300,000 CFA francs (562 US\$).

First Médiac, August 1st, 2020; EAGLE, July 30, 2020.³

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

September 5, 2020 Enkorika, Kajiado County, Kenya



Two men riding motorbikes were carrying 300 kg of meat and heads of Grant's gazelle (*Nanger granti*), zebra, giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*, Appendix II) and dik-dik (genus *Madoqua*). They fled. They were going to make their delivery to clandestine butcher's shops in Kajiado (25,000 inhabitants). Since the closure of the food markets due to Covid-19, the bushmeat trade has taken unexpected paths. Snake meat is sold on street corners as fish fillets. Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, September 13, 2020; The Star, September 12, 2020.⁴

September 25, 2020

Nairobi National Park, Nairobi County, Kenya

International Livestock Research Institute and Swara Plains Conservancy have decided to dedicate 129.5 and 60.7 km² to wildlife protection in Machakos county. The Nairobi national park now covers 315.65 km². The government helped this expansion by allocating to the park 8 km² previously reserved for goats and sheep. On the northern side, the government is also eyeing the 6 km² of a sheep farm that could link the park to Ngong forest. Pathways under the Kajiado and Mombassa highways still need to be dug to facilitate the movement of wildlife between the different areas of the park. Wildlife At Risk, September 25, 2020; Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, September 25, 2020.⁵

UGANDA

February-June 2020 Uganda

Poaching has doubled since the Covid-19 came on the scene. Despite the reduction in the staff available, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) records 367 cases of animal and plant poaching between February and June 2020. The parks are empty of tourists. Looters are sneaking in. Many people have left the cities. They went back to the village. Idleness as much as necessity and impunity drive to predation.

The Independent, July 20, 2020.6

Early August 2020

Murchison Falls National Park, Northern and Western Regions, Uganda

Increased patrolling in the park. Since Covid-19 came into force, poaching has increased, particularly around Nwoya and Oyam. A dozen detectives from the CID (Criminal Investigations Directorate) are committed to protect buffaloes, warthogs, antelopes and elephants. There is a local market for the meat and the tusks are exported. Uganda attracts the big names in poaching. Muazoa Karoumah, a Liberian citizen with supporters in Kenya and Senegal, was arrested in 2019. PML Daily, August 5, 2020.⁷

RWANDA

End of September 2020 Rwanda

The country believes that it has done enough for ecology and restoration of biodiversity to authorize private capital to engage in commercial initiatives. In compliance with existing and pending rules, it will be possible to engage in crocodile farming or to buy 1,000 hectares contiguous to Akagera national park to create a private reserve with ecolodges, entrance tickets and other forms of income. Ahead of the entry into force of the new wildlife law, which still needs to be ratified by parliament, Olivier Nsengimana has rehabilitated a small wetland area along the Kigali-Rwamagana road and dedicated it under the name Bambino Supercity to the accomodation of crowned cranes that are seized from private gardens in the capital and are no longer able to fly large distances. The New Times, October 1st, 2020.8



SOUTH AFRICA

September 2020

Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa Controversial opening of a 12 ha zoo, 45 km from the Kruger national park (20,000 km²). The antizoo petition won 10,000 signatures. In response, Hennie and Melanie Maritz organised a press trip. Several dozen pro-zoos received the journalists with welcome posters. Most of them hope to be recruited by the management and were transported to the site by buses paid for by the Maritz couple. NoZooMpumalanga, Carte Blanche and the NSPCA (National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) are leading the anti-zoo revolt.

•••

... Small mammals including fennec foxes (Vulpes zerda, Appendix II) and ratels (Mellivora capensis, Appendix III in Botswana) are stored in 36 m² enclosures and big cats including Bengal and Siberian tigers, pumas and jaguars in 1,600 m² enclosures. The Pumbaa Wildlife Park presents itself as an educational tool open to the working classes and as a "biological bank".

Lowvelder, August 30 and October 3, 2020; NSPCA, September 7, 2020; The Citizen, September 9, 2020; Carte Blanche, September 29 and October 3, 2020; Getaway Magazine, October 5, 2020.9

BOTSWANA

September 21, 2020 Sir Seretse Khama Mogoditshane, Kweneng Botswana



Arrest of 27 Botswana Defence Force soldiers in possession of pangolin skins, eggs and biltong (dried meat) of ostriches (genus Struthio, Appendix I in 12 African countries). The Voice, September 22, 2020.10

NAMIBIA

August 3, 2020 Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

Arrest of Gabriel Kuutondokwa were in possession of 3 sections of tusks,



Nalitie and David Simon. They a leopard skin and a pangolin. Republikein, August 11, 2020.11

September 16, 2020 Salambala Conservancy, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Angels Lipuo Masilani, a game guard since 2008, and Lifasi Muchelo, a Zambian national claiming to be a cattle herder, were arrested for poaching an impala (Aepyceros melampus) and an Egyptian goose (Alopochen aegyptiaca). Their bail was denied.

Intelligence support Against Poaching, September 22, 2020.12



Egyptian gooses, Alopochen aegyptiaca

(NORTHERN AMERICA)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mid-August 2020

United States of America

This is one of the latest favours for hunters from the Trump administration. Pumas, bobcats, foxes and migrating fish may be taken in 147 wildlife sanctuaries covering a total of 10,000 km². example, American black bears (Ursus For americanus, Appendix II) and grizzly bears (Ursus arctos, Appendix II) will be able to be killed on sight in the Swan River National Wildlife Refuge in Montana and whooping cranes (Grus americana, Appendix II) in Nebraska. Hunters vote, wildlife pays the bill.

Center for Biological Diversity, August 18, 2020.¹³

August 19, 2020

Omaha, State of Nebraska, United States of America



Sentence of Duane S. Mulvaine to 5 years probation, a 45,000 US\$ fine and

50,000 US\$ in restitution to the Nebraska Wildlife Services for poaching white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus, Odocoileus virginianus mayensis, Appendix III in Guatemala), mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus), pronghorn (Antilocapra americana, Appendix I for the Mexican population) and badgers with bait, at night, with a spotlight, from a roadway with prohibited weapons and without a license. Thirteen trophies were found at his home.



He was in cahoots with Hidden Hills Outfitters (HHO), a supplier of weapons, guides, cabins and various equipment to hunters. With HHO's complicity, Mulvaine used "PrimeTine" and "Hard Rack Candy" baits, placed cameras over feeding sites, and immediately spotted deer and other animals approaching them. Using this video surveillance, Mulvaine would shot these targets at close range. To thank HHO for its liberalities, Mulvaine, a Wisconsin garage owner, gave them 10,000 US\$ worth of all-terrain second-hand cars each year. He also operated a "Gun Trust" and provided HHO's guides and customers with weapons with silencer that decimated migratory birds, falcons and other raptors. 29 people have already been convicted in this in conspiracy poaching. In all, they have been fined 343,048 US\$.

US Department of Justice, August 19, 2020.¹⁴

Early September 2020

Cincinnati, State of Ohio, United States of America



Seizure of a dismembered loris (Lorisidae, Appendix I or II), dried frogs and insects and 10 kg of softshell turtle bones in 2 packages from Thailand. The packages were supposed to contain only dried pepper.

Cincinnati Enquirer, September 10, 2020.15

September 24, 2020

State of Michigan, United States of America

Sentencing of Kurt Duncan to 90 days in prison, a fine of 36,240 US\$ and the revocation for life of his hunting licences in Michigan for poaching 18 wolves (Canis lupus, Appendix II), 3 bald eagles (Haliaeetus leucocephalus, Appendix



II), a bobcat (Lynx rufus, Appendix II), a bear and deer over the past 18 months. He was marketing amulets, feathers, skins and buried the remains of the carcasses.

State of Michigan, May 20, 2020; CBS Detroit, October 15, 2020.16

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN)

ARGENTINA

Early September 2020 Villa María, General San Martín Department, Province of Córdoba, Argentina

Seizure of 13 deer (genus Cervus), 3 antelopes, 2 capybaras (genus Hydrochoerus) and 20 birds including golden-billed saltators (Saltator aurantiirostris), red-crested cardinals (Paroaria coronata), ultramarine grosbeaks (Cyanocompsa brissonii), pampa finches (Embernagra platensis), grassland



yellow finches (Sicalis luteola) and plush-crested jays (Cyanocorax chrysops). All the animals were entrusted to the Parque Ecológico Urbano de Río Cuarto.

Cadena 3, September 5, 2020.17



Pampa finches, Embernagra platensis

BRAZIL

July 2020

Port of Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil Manaus, fishing and hunting port.

- Seizure of 313 kg of arapaima (Arapaima gigas, Appendix II) fillets concealed under 341 kg of pacu (also known as tambaqui, Colossoma macropomum), 2 kg of lard from Amazonian manatee (Trichechus inunguis, Appendix I) known locally as "mexira" and 15 kg of paca (Cuniculus paca, Appendix III in Honduras), armadillo (family Dasypodidae) and agouti (genus Dasyprocta) meat. Arrest of the captain.



- Seizure in the hold of a boat sailing from upstream Manaus and behind Beruri а false partition of poached fish, 17 pacas, 3 armadillos, 2 yellow-headed sideneck turtles (Podocnemis unifilis, Appendix II) and a bare-faced curassow (Crax fasciolata).

G1, July 8, 2020; Em Tempo, July 1st, 2020.¹⁸

Mid-July 2020 Belo Horizonte, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil



The animal jumble was traded via the Internet or other words of mouth. More

than 2,000 US\$ in fines for keeping 2 black-bellied sliders (*Trachemys dorbigni*), 2 Brazilian porcupines (*Coendou prehensilis*), 2 lizards (suborder Lacertilia) and a barely hatched cobra (family Elapidae). G1, July 20, 2020.¹⁹

July 30, 2020

Rio de Janeiro, State of Rio de Janeiro, and Pindamonhangaba, State of São Paulo, Brazil





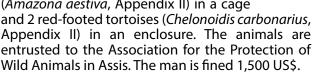
Seizure of 2 jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I) skins with heads in a chic area of the capital, along with 2 juvenile cobras (family Elapidae) and various trophies. A supplementary search was carried out in a garage belonging to the family without any convicing result. The case has extensions to almost 300 km from Rio de Janeiro. A man was arrested and cobras (family Elapidae), turtles, lizards, tarantulas, centipedes and scorpions were seized from his home.

UOL, July 30, 2020.20

August 23, 2020

Panorama, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Inspection of a farm. The environmental police find a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) in a cage



G1, August 24, 2020.²¹

August 30, 2020

Várzea Grande, State of Masso Grosso, Brazil

An intervention for domestic violence leads to the seizure of a 38-calibre Rossi revolver, a parrot (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, Appendix II). Arrest of the suspect. He is charged with assault, unlawful possession of a firearm and possession of wild animals. VG Notícias, August 30, 2020.²²

September 5, 2020 Coari, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure on board a ship 360 km from Manaus of 50 eggs of yellow-headed sideneck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II), 10 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) fillets and 5 live turtles. G1, September 6, 2020.²³

OPERATION ARA

Mid-September 2020

Ribeirão das Neves, Sete Lagoas, Caratinga, Uberlândia, Manhuaçu and Caraí, State of Minas Gerais and Nova Friburgo, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Seizure of over 100 animals including golden lion tamarins (*Leontopithecus rosalia*, Appendix I), capuchin monkeys (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II), caimans (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), macaws (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), rufous-bellied thrushes (*Turdus rufiventris*), green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), tamanduas (*Tamandua tetradactyla*) and 105 blood samples of parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and blue-andyellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). Jornal Estado de Minas, September 21, 2020.²⁴

OPERATION JEQUITIBA September 21, 2020 Franca, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure at the home of a 19 year old man, who had been trafficking in wild animals since the age of 12, of 3 marmosets (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II), a turtle (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), an American barn owl (*Tyto furcata*), 5 Brazilian blue dwarf beauty tarantulas (*Dolichothele diamantinensis*), 3 fourtoed hedgehogs (*Atelerix albiventris*), several snakes including a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*) and a kingsnake (genus *Lampropeltis*), and 2 firearms. G1, Sepember 21, 2020.²⁵

OPERATION JEQUITIBA September 21, 2020 Jales, State of São Paulo, Brazil



Seizure of cobras (family Elapidae), lizards, tarantulas, hedgehogs in a shed at the back of a house. Fine equal to 10,000 US\$. G1, September 22, 2020.²⁶



September 21, 2020

Presidente Prudente, State of São Paulo, Brazil

- Seizure of a python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), a milk snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*), a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*) and 2 California kingsnakes (*Lampropeltis* californiae).



- Seizure of 3 boas (Boa

spp., Appendix I or II), 14 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), 2 Geoffroy's toadhead turtles (*Phrynops geoffroanus*) and 2 blue fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II).

- Seizure in jars filled with formalin of 6 boas, a turtle (Chelonoidis carbonarius or Chelonoidis denticulatus, Appendix II), 2 black-bellied slider (*Trachemys dorbigni*), 3 large American possums (genus Didelphis), a hedgehog, a nine-banded armadillo (Dasypus novemcinctus) and a smooth-billed ani (Crotophaga ani).

G1, September 22, 2020.27



September 24, 2020 Porto Grande, State of Amapá, Brazil

Seizure of meat of paca (genus *Cuniculus*), caiman (Caiman spp., Appendix I or II) and collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II) poached in the Amapa national forest. Five arrests. G1, September 24, 2020.²⁸

COLOMBIA

Early August 2020

Ubaté, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia Seizure in 2 houses of 8 turtles: 4 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), a yellow-headed sideneck turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II), 2 common sliders (*Trachemys scripta*) and one scorpion mud turtle (*Kinosternon scorpioides*). One caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and one macaw (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) were also seized. El Espectador, August 10, 2020.²⁹

COSTA RICA

End of September 2020 Buenos Aires, Puntarenas Province, Costa Rica



Seizure of a male ostrich (*Struthio camelus*), a female ostrich, a pair of emus (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) and several deer in a clandestine facility operated by an outsider in the Ujarrás indigenous territory. La Nación, September 29, 2020.³⁰

FRANCE (GUADELOUPE)

September 25, 2020 Capesterre-Belle-Eau and Trois-Rivières, Department of Guadeloupe, France



Seizure in 2 private homes of 2 green monkeys (*Chlorocebus sabaeus*, Appendix II), 2 royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and a raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) smuggled into the island and bred without the mandatory certificate of competency. They will be killed due to the lack of a specialised shelter on the island.

Guadeloupe La 1^{ère}, September 25, 2020.³¹

August 28, 2020

Yaxhá-Nakum-Naranjo National Park, Flores, Department of Petén, Guatemala

Release of 73 wild animals including ocelots (Leopardus pardalis, Appendix I), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), anteaters (suborder Vermilingua), coatis (Nasua narica, Appendix III in Honduras) and tortoises. The operation was conducted by the CONAP (Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas) and the NGO ARCAS (Asociación de Rescate v Conservación de Vida Silvestre). The 40 birds, 18 reptiles and 15 mammals had been pulled out of traffickers' hands or seized from private homes. The Yaxhá-Nakum-Naranjo national park is a flora mosaic listed in the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. Infobae, August 29, 2020.32

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

July 14, 2020 Xining, Qinghai Province, China

Sentencing of 2 men to 12 years and 11 years imprisonment and fines of 630,000 and 200,000 yuan (89,000 and 28,300 US\$) for illegally importing, possessing and attempting to sell a tiger skin and a tiger skin patch, pangolin scales, nearly 500 pieces of ivory jewellery and other wildlife by-products with an estimated economic value of 3.9 million yuan (550,000 US\$).



Qinghai Province, see "On the Trail" n°3 p. 75, n°12 p. 107, n°14 p. 54, n°23 p. 14, p. 155.

China News, July 14, 2020.33



July 15, 2020 Dongxing, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Customs seized 1,500 g of swallow nests, 1,348 g of dried eel fillets and 89 g of dried seahorses from the luggage of 3 passengers. Chinese Customs, July 17, 2020.³⁴

OPERATION "BLOCK-04"

July 24, 2020 Fujian, Jiangsu and Guangdong Provinces and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China



Dismantling of a network that extended from Fangchenggang near the border with Viet Nam to Lianyungang north of Shanghai. Simultaneous arrest of 7 suspects in Fujian, Jiangsu, Guangdong and Guangxi. Seizure of 6 concave-casqued hornbills (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I) in a SUV with secret compartments and 70 animals including caracals (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I) and monkeys (Appendix I or II) from a pet wholesaler. The flagship of the gang was the hornbill. A certain Yang, from Fuzhou, opposite the island of Taiwan, is suspected of having imported around 20 of them since the beginning of the year.

Chinese Customs, July 30, 2020.35



August 10, 2020 Chongzuo Border Post, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.



Seizure of 14.5 kg of pangolin scales, 171 worked ivories, suspected tiger teeth from a vehicle. Three arrests. China Daily, September 22, 2020. ³⁶

End of August 2020

Hainan Province, Liuzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Lubei District, Hebei Province, China



A man nicknamed Hou was sentenced to a 3-year suspended prison sentence, 5 years' probation and a fine of 100,000 yuan (14,300 US\$) for having purchased a turtle shell, 24 tiger claws, worked ivories and hornbill helmet red ivory jewellery in markets or on social networks between 2008 and 2019. The total value of the purchases is equal to 27,000 US\$.



The overall proceeds from the resale are not known. Hou during the period of probation is prohibited from engaging in any activity directly or indirectly relating to wildlife.

Tangshan.huanbohainews.com, August 24, 2020.37

August 27, 2020

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 5 pieces of jewellery made of ivory, turtle scutes and red coral in a postal parcel from Japan.

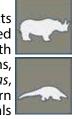
China National Radio, September 20, 2020.³⁸

September 10, 2020

Wanning, Haikou, Tanmen and Qionghai, Hainan Province and Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China



Appearance of the 6 main suspects specialised in the trafficking of worked ivories, raw elephant and mammoth ivory, live sea turtles, tortoiseshell items, nautilus and giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II), rhinoceros horns and horn powder, pangolin scales, stony corals (order Scleractinia, Appendix II) and blue



corals (*Heliopora coerulea*, Appendix II), stuffed sharks, fins and jaws, live pythons (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) and monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). The value of the dead and live "goods" is estimated at 33 million yuan or 4.8 million US\$, to which must be added 5,137 pieces of porcelain dinnerware recovered from shipwrecks and dating from the Song (960 to 1279), Yuan (1271 to 1368), Ming (1368 to 1644) and Qing (1644 to 1912) dynasties. The mechanisms of the network have not been revealed. ... The origin and fate of the 210 hawksbill turtles, as well as the exact origin of the teapots and other china dishes looted from the wrecks, are unknown to this day. The revenue of the network came from sales to jewellers and craft shops and via the Internet. The investigation and simultaneous searches mobilised 110 police officers and led to the arrest of 15 people.

Hinews, September 11, 2020; The People's Government of Hainan Province, October 13, 2020; China News, October 12, 2020.³⁹









September 14, 2020 Chongzuo, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China



Beginning of the trial of 8 traffickers who fraudulently imported pangolin scales and dired seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) from Viet Nam to Bozhou (Anhui province). Value of the seahorses: 360,000 yuan (55,600 US\$). Sina, September 17, 2020.⁴⁰

September 14, 2020 Yueqing, Zhejiang Province, China

Appearance of a couple for trafficking in 226 horns of saiga antelopes (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), 7 preputial glands of musk deer (genus *Moschus*), 93 gall bladders of reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II). The man and the woman had been caught up in wildlife trafficking for several years and had over time found suppliers in Russia, Nigeria, Viet Nam.

News.66wz.com, September 22, 2020.41

September 27, 2020

Ningxiang City, Hunan Province, China The traffickers were engaged in the smuggling and the sale of wildlife products via WeChat and other social networks. The import-export company had over the years built an underground black market which has ramifications in Hunan, Fujian, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Anhui, Hebei, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongijang and neighbouring countries. Their main activity was to import saiga antelope horns (Saiga tatarica, Appendix II) from Russia in taxis and private vehicles. The drivers were paid 100 yuan (14 US\$) per kilo transported. The gang rented a warehouse in Suifenhe on the border with Russia.





... In March 2019, the investigation starts with the seizure of 8 modern ivory Buddha effigies with an overall weight of 210 g and an estimated value of 1,310 US\$. The case gains weight in December when police after untangling several threads of what they compare to a silk cocoon was seizing from private homes and an SUV a rhino horn libation cup, 8 musk deer preputial glands, 3 vials of bear bile powder, 3,566 g of wild yak (*Bos mutus*, Appendix I) bones and 7 wild yak penises and testicles supposed to improve sexual performances.

Following the seizure of several parcels containing 467 saiga horns at the Harbin postal sorting centre in Heilongjiang, police trace the source and seize 394 new horns in the Suifenhe warehouse operated by the only woman in the network. She was in charge of weighing the horns, receiving customers and dealing with the encrypted transactions. In all, the value of the smuggled horns is estimated at 19.86 million yuan for 993 horns i.e. 20,000 yuan (2,915 US\$) per horn. The trial was followed, despite movement restrictions imposed by Covid, by judicial officers and magistrates from every corner of the province.



Five people were sentenced to 10 years in prison and fines ranging from 50,000 to 300,000 yuan (7,290 to 43,725 US\$). Twelve people were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 6 months to 8 years and fines ranging from 5,000 to 100,000 yuan (730 to 14,575 US\$).

Xxcb.cn, September 28, 2020, China.org, December 3, 2020; Xinhua, December 10, 2020.⁴²

January-September 2020 China

The Covid-19 boosts the plundering of wild animals. 15,154 people were arrested in all provinces of mainland China in the first 9 months of 2020, an increase of 66.2% compared to the first 9 months of 2019. 6,974 people were arrested for illegal fishing activities. Around 4,000 people were arrested for poaching offences, 3,007 for trafficking in protected wildlife species, 1,131 for the offence of poaching endangered species and 273 for the offence of smuggling endangered species. Plundering of fish and land animals is concentrated in the inland provinces, and the offences of transporting and buying protected species are concentrated in the coastal provinces. Short supply chains coexist with long ones.

The Supreme People's Procuratorate has published these aggregate statistics, pointing out that much of the wildlife business has turned to the Internet and that deliveries are made via logistics platforms and express collection points. Consignees are difficult to uncover. The wild pet segment has also benefited from the lockdown measures or mobility restrictions. This trend has been observed in countries other than China, especially for songbirds and ornamental birds.

Reuters, November 10, 2020; Scol.com from Thecover, November 10, 2020.⁴³

FAMILY AFFAIRS August 13, 2020 Hsinchu County, Taiwan

15 people were charged. They were poaching and cutting down protected cypress tree in Guanwu Forest in conspiracy and in family. They had killed, among others, an Asian black bear (Ursus thibetanus formosanus, Appendix I) and a Taiwan serow (Capricornis swinhoei). The gang had been established for at least a year on the mountain and had 3 living and timber storage bases. The head



storage bases. The head of operations, known as Ho, called on relatives to bring down the wood consignments. Each trip was paid for with 3,000 to 5,000 Taiwanese dollars (100 to 150 US\$). The consignments were sold for between 30,000 and 300,000 Taiwan dollars or 1,000 to 10,000 US\$. Ho says the traps were set to prevent the boars from stealing food. The Taiwan Black Bear Conservation Association estimates that the population of Asian black bears on the island is between 200 and 600 individuals.

Focus Taiwan, August 14, 2020; Taiwan News, August 14, 2020.⁴⁴



Taiwan serow, Capricornis swinhoei



CAMBODIA

July 17, 2020

Veun Sai-Siem Pang National Park, Ratanakkiri Province, Cambodia

Handing over of 39 weapons, 4 machine guns and 35 handmade weapons to the authorities as part of the "safe village-commune policy" initiative. As many lead pellet shots that wildlife will not have to suffer.

The Phnom Penh Post, July 20, 2020.45

End of August 2020 Cambodia

Seizure by Wildlife Alliance of 2 boats full of wood and 9 bundles of wood drawn by oxen, 27 chainsaws, 76 kg of wild meat, a turtle and 2 live birds. 4 timber traffickers arrested.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, August 24, 2020.46

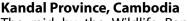
End of August 2020

Stung Proat Station (Pangolin Station), Koh Kong Province, Cambodia

Assessment of a 9-day patrol. Release of a stumptailed macaque (Macaca arctoides, Appendix II) destined for the animal market in Phnom Penh, 9 birds, a bat and a snake. Seizure of 300 bundles of wood, 2 electric fishing nets, 25 traps and 3 chainsaws. Dismantling of 2 logging camps and a skidding tractor.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, August 28, 2020.47

September 1st, 2020







authorities resulted in the closure of an illegal zoo and the transfer in specialised shleters of a Malayan bear (Helarctos malayanus, Appendix I), a pileated gibbon (Hylobates pileatus, Appendix I), African golden jackals (Canis aureus), leopard cats, civets, a binturong (Arctictis binturongs), turtles and tortoises.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, September 1st, 2020.48

INDONESIA

REPEATED OFFENSE July 16, 2020 Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



10

Irawan Shia alias Aju was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment and a fine of one billion rupiah (61,680 US\$) with an additional 6 months imprisonment in

case of non-payment for attempting to

fraudulently import 4 African lion cubs, a leopard cub and 58 Indian star tortoises (Geochelone elegans, Appendix I) from continental Malaysia. ...

... Yatno, Asrin and Safrizal who acted as accomplices were sentenced to 2 years and 6 months jail and a fine of one billion rupiah with 6 months jail in case of non-payment. Asrin and Safrizal had conveyed the animals by sea from Malaysia via Rupat Island and left them with Yatno who transported them by bus to Riau city. The Riau police stopped the trafficking in December 2019. The final destination was the island of Java and the flourishing pet market in Jakarta.

The purchase price of the felines in Malaysia was 80 million rupiah or 5,000 US\$ and the Indian star tortoises 116 million rupiah or 2 million rupiah per individual (125 US\$).

Aju is a repeat offender in wildlife trafficking. The lion cubs and turtles were entrusted to Taman Safari. The leopard cub did not survive the stress of the journey by sea and bus.

Garda Animalia, July 16, 2020.49

End of July 2020

Port of Bitung, North Sulawesi Province, Celebes Island, Indonesia

Homecoming for agile wallabies (Macropus agilis), cassowaries (family Casuariidae), Papuan hornbills (Rhyticeros plicatus, Appendix II) and reptiles, 91 of the 300 animals who in April 2019 had been seized by authorities in Davao, Philippines, on board a tub coming from Celebes Island. Two sailors in troubled waters had been arrested. The Philippines and Indonesia cooperated and the 91 survivors strong enough to withstand the journey arrived by boat in the port of Bitung. Before being if possible released they will pass through the Tasikosi Rescue Center.

The Jakarta Post, July 31, 2020. 50

Early August 2020

Ambon, Maluku Province, Indonesia

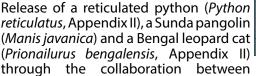
The Maluku Islands (or the Moluccas) are recovering their heritage. 25 Moluccan cockatoos (Cacatua moluccensis, Appendix I), 3 white cockatoos (Cacatua alba, Appendix II), 2 Goffin's cockatoos (Cacatua goffiniana, Appendix I), 16 red lories (Eos rubra, Appendix II), one black-winged lory (Eos cyanogenia, Appendix II), 5 chattering lories (Lorius garrulus, Appendix II), 4 coconut lorikeets (Trichoglossus haematodus, Appendix II), 42 bluetongued skinks (genus Tiliqua) and 27 sailfin lizards (Hydrosaurus amboinensis) seized far from their homes in the north of Sumatra island, Jakarta and in the east of Java island, have been repatriated by air. Those that are in good shape will be released in the Mount Sahuwai nature reserve in West Seram Regency and in the Manusela national park. Those who need to get back into shape will be hosted for a while in Ambon and on Seram Island. A cockatoo sells for around 34 US\$ on the Moluccas and 10 times more on Java island.

The Jakarta Post, August 15, 2020.⁵¹

August 27, 2020

Siranggas Wildlife Reserve, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

thon golin d cat



BKSDA and the Scorpion Foundation. The reserve covers 56 km². It is also home to orangutans and Sumatran tigers. The python was caught up as a precaution near Sei Serdang on August 15. It was suspected of attacking goats in rural communities and the conflict could have turned bad, including for the reptile.

Scorpion, August 16 and 23, 2020.52

End of August 2020 Sumatra Island, Indonesia

The Mongabay newspaper traces the career of a poacher who started out in the "business" at the age of 17 and gave it up as he approached 50. Suratno has switched sides. Today, he works with institutional teams that are focusing on avoiding tensions between human populations and elephants. His testimony sheds light on the poachers' methods. They set fire to the alang-alang grass around Way Kambas park. Within 8 days, the regrowth attracts dozens of deer and other herbivores. All that is left to do is to fire into the crowd. The arson fires spread throughout the park, which covers 1,300 km². In the days of poaching, Suratno set 5 fires a year. The smoke, the burnt trees, the smouldering fires in the peatlands are damaging to the small population of Sumatran rhinoceroses, who need a healthy, productive and homogeneous habitat. Fragmentation is their worst enemy, along with poachers. In the course of 2019, more than 2,300 fire outbreaks were reported by the park's fire-fighting teams. Everyone has their own findings, advice and recommendations. Suratno, now a member of the Wildlife Conservation Society, advocates a long-term approach with raising the ecological awareness of poachers in the crosshairs. Sukatmoko, the park's director, relies on active education by his staff to convince children and teenagers of the need to protect nature and vulnerable species. Widodo Ramono, director of the NGO YABI (Indonesia Rhino Foundation), confirms that burning by poachers is "a classic". The solution, according to him, would be to create alternative resources for poachers. He raises the possibility of employing them as naturalist guides or with their families as hosts for park visitors. He would like to see the combustible alang-alang grass replaced with fire-resistant plants that can also serve as fodder for elephants and rhinos. Widodo adds that YABI is in touch with the local communities. They grow fodder that YABI buys as an extra food for the rhino sanctuary it runs inside the park. Mongabay, August 21, 2020. 53

September 10, 2020

Lubuk Sikaping, Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



MN and PS were carrying 2 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 2 Javanese pangolin skins and the 2 horns of a southern serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*, Appendix I). MN is said to be a figure of poaching with experience in trapping hornbills and tigers about which he is boasting. Kumparan.com, September 12, 2020; Padangkita, September 13, 2020.⁵⁴

September 14, 2020 Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia A 25-year-old student was sentenced



to one year and 3 months in prison for operating an illegal zoo. He was asking 10,000 rupiah (US\$ 0.7) for each visitor. The Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), the 2 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), the 4 salt-water crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix II), the hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), the brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II), the binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix II), the binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III), the binturong ver to the BKSDA with instructions from the public prosecutor to release them.

. Tribun Pontianak, September 14, 2020.⁵⁵

MALAYSIA

OPERATION BERSEPADU KHAZANAH July 7-13, 2020

Kluang, State of Johor, Jerantut, State of Pahang, Gua Musang, State of Kelantan and Seberang Jaya, State of Penang, Malaysia

- Seizure of 7.5 kg of meat and 4 carapaces of softshell turtles (family Trionychidae) and 4.4 kg of wild boar meat.

- Seizure of a box full of wild animal carcasses, 2 guns, 4 nooses and other forest poaching accessories.

- Seizure of 15 claws and a paw of Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), 3 fangs and a carcass of tiger, 3 gall bladders, bones and meat of wild animals, 13 bird feathers, 5 pangolin scales and a batch of agarwood. Arrest of 2 Cambodians.

- Seizure of 5 carcasses of Asian palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*), 7 claws of Malayan sun bear, 97 teeth of wild boar and 69 gall bladders of monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). Arrest of 4 Malaysian subjects, one of whom is believed to be a long-wanted elephant and tiger poacher, 2 Cambodian and one Vietnamese.

The operation was coordinated by the Perhilitan with the 3rd Battalion of Bidor, the 18th Battalion of Pengkalan Hulu and NGOs such as MyCAT (Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers) and Rimba ("jungle" in Malay)).

The New Straits Times, July 16, 2020; Traffic, July 17, 2020.⁵⁶

July 23, 2020 Sibu, State of Sarawak, Malaysia

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) arrested 2 men. They were selling "medicines" based on poached animals in 5 shops in violation of the WPO (Wildlife Protection Ordinance). During their interrogation by the SFC (Sarawak Forestry Corporation), the 2 suspects tried to sweep the issue under the rug by offering the investigators 30,000 ringgit or 7,000 US\$.

Berita Harian, July 23, 2020.57

July 27, 2020

Kota Kinabalu, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Indictment of Chung En Kin, 64 years old; he held 36.10kg of banteng (*Bos javanicus*) meat, 5 bodies of large flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus*, Appendix II), 4 legs and antlers of a sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*). He was released on bail of 7,202 US\$. He pleads not guilty.

Daily Express, July 28, 2020.58

OPERATION KHAZANAH PEMBURUAN HAIWAN August 9, 2020

Mersing and Kluang, State of Johor, Malaysia

- Arrest at 1.30 am by the GOF (General Operations Force) and Perhilitan (Department of Wildlife and National Park) and seizure of wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) meat, porcupine (family Hystricidae) quills, 3 machetes, 3 shotgun bullets, homemade rifles and a Mitsubishi Triton.

- Arrest of 2 men and a woman. Seizure of 54 portions of wild boar meat, 10 portions of presumed black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) meat, 2 deer heads and 6 portions of deer meat, a revolver, 270 bullets and a Toyota Hilux.

The State's sultan, Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, is threatening with severe sanctions against restaurant owners who continue to serve "exotic meat" and poached animals to their customers. "It needs to be stopped immediately".

Malay Mail, August 10, 2020; The New Straits Times, August 11, 2020.⁵⁹

THAILAND

July 29, 2020 Thailand

Premchai Karnasuta's storytelling never ends (see "On the Trail" n°27 p.110, p.126 and n°28 p.132). The court of appeals has



... In it, the Thai public works tycoon is heard asking the rangers who surrounded the bivouac, " Is there any way you could help me out? Any measures to follow? If you need anything, I'll get it for you." The court found that Premchai's words on the spot were sufficient to prove his attempted bribery. Guilt consequently, but also bankable. Premchai was released immediately on 16,000 US\$ bail pending the decision of the Supreme Court, before which his lawyers will make an application in the coming days.

CTN News, July 30 and August 13, 2020.60

August 20, 2020 Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, focebook Thailand

Seizure of 3 black giant squirrels (*Ratufa* bicolor, Appendix II) and a black-winged kite (*Elanus caeruleus*, Appendix II). The seller was working on Facebook. *Elanus caeruleus*, see

"On the Trail"n°13 p. 31, n°14 p. 29, p. 107, n°18 p. 35, n°25 p. 114, n°27 p. 52, p. 122 and n°28 p. 48 Greencop – Thailand, August 21, 2020.⁶¹





Black-winged kite, Elanus caeruleus

maintained the one-year prison sentence handed down by the court of first instance for attempted bribery of state officials, in this case rangers of the Thung Yai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary, where in February 2018 he was caught in flagrante delicto of poaching in an organised gang. The court listened carefully to a new document adduced by the head ranger of the sanctuary. ...

August 24, 2020 Mae Ka, Phayao Province, Thailand



Arrest by the Wild Hawk Force of Pongsakorn Boonta, a wildlife seller via Facebook. He had been tracked for 2 to 3 years. Seizure of a Nicobar pigeon (Caloenas nicobarica, Appendix I), a grey-headed parakeet (Psittacula finschii, Appendix II), 4 Asian golden weavers (Ploceus hypoxanthus), 3 common buttonquails (Turnix sylvaticus), a sooty-headed bulbul (Pycnonotus aurigaster), 3 leafbirds (family Chloropseidae) 2 lineated barbets (Psilopogon lineatus), 2 watercocks (Gallicrex cinerea), a Javan myna (Acridotheres javanicus), 6 Asian leaf turtles (Cyclemys dentata, Appendix II) and 4 south Asian box turtles (Cuora amboinensis, Appendix II). He presents himself as a supplier of hamsters, mice, sawdust, fodder to pet shops. He obtained wild animals from a few hunters gatherers. He also practised the incubation at home of bird and turtle eggs stolen from the forests.

DNP Wildhawk, August 25, 2020; The Nation Thailand, August 25, 2020.⁶²



Nicobar pigeon, Caloenas nicobarica

End of August 2020 Phu Khiao Wildlife Sanctuary, Chaiyaphum Province, Thailand

Release in the presence of Varawut Silpa-archa, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, and Thanya Netithamakul, Director of National Parks, of 360 seized animals able to be self-sufficient in food. DNP Wildhawk, August 29, 2020.⁶³



Early July 2020

Ba Ria, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Viet Nam

In a restaurant, a squirrel and an iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) served as attractions. For a customer, they served as repellents. The forest protection department was immediately alerted. The 2 clowns are recovering in the Dau Tieng station. ENV, July 5, 2020.⁶⁴

End of July 2020 Da Nang Municipality, Viet Nam



Seizure of 4 concave-casqued hornbills (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I), one wreathed hornbill (*Rhyticeros undulatus*, Appendix II), one yellow-cheeked crested gibbon (*Nomascus gabriellae*, Appendix I), one raccoon in a private home. ENV, July 20, 2020.⁶⁵

End of August 2020

Son La and Nghe An Provinces, Viet Nam

- Seizures of animal remains. Antelopes, hornbills, owls victims of the poacher are reduced to a weight report: 88 kg.

- Seizure of 4 Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) paws with a total weight of 11 kg. The man said he had bought them from 2 Laotians and kept them until he could make a good deal. ENV, August 25, 2020; Baonghean, August 22, 2020.⁶⁶

September 2, 2020 Lien Nghia, Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a pangolin (1.9 kg), a civet (2.7 kg) and 2 yellow-headed tortoises

(Indotestudo elongata, Appendix II) (1.2 and 1.4 kg) at the home of Ngo Tri Mau, aged 61. He reportedly bought the 4 animals for 5 million dong (215 US\$)



and wanted to eat them with his family to cure asthma and cardiovascular disorders. Báo điện tử Tiền Phong, September 2, 2020.67

September 10, 2020

Dak Sin, Dak Nong Province, Viet Nam Arrest of Ms Nguyen Thi Tri, a wild animal seller. At her home, the police found a pangolin weighing 4.2 kg, a wild cat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II) weighing 2.5 kg, 2 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) weighing 3.6 kg, 2 Vietnam mouse-deer (*Tragulus versicolor*) weighing 2.5 kg and



a weasel (genus *Mustela*) weighing 1.5 kg, all dead. Plo.vn, September 10, 2020.⁶⁸

September 10, 2020 Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam



Police raid on a private home, seizure of a live pangolin, about 20 kg of monkey feet and 22 kg of wild meat.

ENV, September 11, 2020.69

September 15, 2020 Ha Dong District, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Escalation of sentences inflicted on Nguyen Mau Chien, at whose home raw ivory, rhino horn, frozen tiger cubs and other evidence of heavy involvement in wildlife trafficking were discovered and seized in 2017 (see "On the Trail" n°17 p.87 and n°18 p.57).



Mau Chien was sentenced to 13 months in prison in March 2018 and on appeal to an additional 3 months in prison in March 2019 (n° 21 p. 67, n° 21 p. 118 and n° 24 p. 90). The Supreme People's Court in Hanoi found that the sentences did not correspond to the



serious nature of the crime and Mau Chien had to come back to the court. He was given a 23 months jail. ENV notes with satisfaction that criminal penalties for wildlife offenders are increasing. They have risen from nothing or a few weeks suspended in 2015 to several months or years without suspension in 2020.

VTV, September 15, 2020.70

End of September 2020 Long Thanh District, Dong Nai Province, Viet Nam

Seizure in an agricultural establishment of a clouded monitor (*Varanus nebulosus*, Appendix I), a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II), 3 / giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) and a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). ENV, September 26, 2020.⁷¹

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 1st, 2020

Jwalapur, Haridwar District, State of Uttarakhand, India

The religious goods store was not as pious as it claimed to be. Under the cover of selling accessories for puja - a ritual of domestic offerings - the shopkeeper was trading in animal parts. Officials of the Dehradun and Haridwar Forest Divisions exhumed from his house a Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) hemipenis or hatha jodi (see "On the Trail" n° 17, p. 24), a snake skin, Indian crested porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) quills and coral sent for identification to the Wildlife Institute.

The Times of India, July 3, 2020.72

July 8, 2020

Imphal, Imphal District, State of Manipur, India Destruction of 4.3 kg of monkey meat, 9.1 kg of bear meat and 3.7 kg of unidentified venison in the presence of Forest Department officials. They had been seized by Indigo Airlines personnel from passengers bound for Delhi. Another seizure of 40 kg of bear meat and venison was made on May 17 by Indigo Airlines.

The Hindu, July 9, 2020.73

July 15, 2020

Vadala, Junagadh District, State of Gujarat, India

Arrest of 8 poachers by a forest guard patrol. The individuals were holding a wounded Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) and a carcasse of golden jackal (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India).

Outlook India, July 19, 2020.74

July 20, 2020

State Highway 248, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India

Roshan Ramrao Ganvir and Golu Netram Shahu were travelling in an autorickshaw with 3 plastic bags containing a corpse of Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), a corpse of barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) and 2.5 kg of wild boar (*Sus scrofa cristatus*) meat. They were intercepted by forest officers.

The Hitavada, July 22, 2020.75

July 21, 2020

Ujjain, Ujjain District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The meeting place was a hotel room in the surburban neighbourhood of Bypass Road. 10people, including4women, weregathered around a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) and an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). Both species have in common the fact that they are used in Indian occultism. The transaction was in full swing when officers of the Forest Department and the Special Task Force (STF) of the police intervened. They arrested Rekha Dharavania, Rashmi Yadav, Sudha Pandey, Nilima Mali, Karan Mali, Vaibhav Chouhan, Manoj Giri, Chetan Khandelwal, Mukesh Shrivastava and Rajkumar Malviya and seized 2 vehicles.

Outlook India, July 21, 2020.76

July 21, 2020

Chennai, Chennai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

The parcel was arriving from Howrah (State of West Bengal, 1,660 km away) by a goods train. Three men loaded it on a van. Inside, nearly 500 birds including mustached parakeets (*Psittacula alexandri*, Appendix II), channel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos vitellinus*, Appendix II, native to South America), lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II), cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*, native to Australia), passerines (family Fringillidae) and a pair of squirrel monkeys (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II, native to South America), flabbergasted among the birds. When the road police officers asked to see the certificates of origin, the 3 conveyors were unable to show them. The shipment destined for pet shops was seized.

The Times of India, July 22 and 23, 2020.77

July 28, 2020

Lailapur, Cachar District, State of Assam, India

A strange smell was emanating from the shipment of fruits of a truck controlled with 2 men on board arriving from Mizoram at the Assam border. The forest guards were looking for illegally logged timber. The driver tried to explain to them that it was rotten fruit, but he failed to convince them. The search revealed several plastic and cardboard boxes containing 3 giant Adalbra giant tortoises (Aldabrachelys gigantea, Appendix II, endemic to the Seychelles Islands), 3 pairs of hyacinth macaws (Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus, Appendix I, South America), a pair of capuchin monkeys (Sapajus spp., synonymous with Cebus spp., Appendix II, South America) and a juvenile red kangaroo (Macropus rufus, Australia). Narsimha Reddy and Navnath Tukaram Daigude said they were travelling to Guwahati but investigators believe the final destination must have been Kolkata or Mumbai. Labels on the fruit crates revealed their Thai origin. The shipment probably travelled through Myanmar into India via Mizoram. The international menagerie was taken over by the Guwahati Zoo.

The Hindu, July 29, 2020; The Indian Express, July 29, 2020; The Times of India, July 30, 2020; Northeast Now, August 2, 2020.⁷⁸



Red kangaroos, Macropus rufus

REPEATED OFFENSE OPERATION WILDNET-3 August 12, 2020 Ujjain, Ujjain District, State of Madhya



Pradesh, India Linked to a wildlife trafficking ring and already charged in other cases, Rohit

Bishlavat this time fell into the hands of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau assisted by the Tiger Strike Force. He was offering for sale on YouTube 3 ivory bracelets, 2 of which were decorated with semiprecious stones, and 2 hemipenis of Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I).

WCCB, August 11, 2020; The Hitavada, August 12, 2020.⁷⁹

REPEATED OFFENSE August 20, 2020 Parasegowdanapalya, Chamara

Parasegowdanapalya, Chamarajanagar District, State of Karnataka, India

Federal agents of the WCCB supported by forest guards arrested Mahadeva (28 years old), Kumar (20 years old), Mahadeva (22 years old) and Rangaswamy (23 years old), seized their 2 motorbikes and uncovered the cache where they were holding 4 claws and a bone of tiger, 2 claws of leopard, 2 skins and bones of Asiatic wild dogs or dholes (Cuon alpinus, Appendix II), 2 skins of spotted deer (Axis axis), 2 skins of barking deer or Indian muntjacs (Muntiacus muntjak), 2 skins of sambar deer (Rusa unicolor) and 2 skins of flying squirrels (family Sciuridae). Despite their young age, the 4 men from the Soliga tribe are suspected of poaching for several years in Male Mahadeshwara Wildlife Sanctuary, Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary and Biligiri Ranganatha Swamy temple tiger reserve. WCCB, August 21, 2020; The Times of India, August 22, 2020.⁸⁰

August 26, 2020 Shamli, Shamli District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India



The Ayurvedic clinic claimed to specialise in "sexual disorders". It was a perfect cover

for an animal product trade with ramifications in several states. But an animal advocate in Delhi spotted it. The Forest Department raid was fruitful: tiger and leopard claws, deer antlers, organs and limbs of Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), snake and golden jackal (*Canis aureus*, Appendix II) in Pakistan) were waiting to be mixed with panaceas for the naive. The boss, Nishant Gupta, ended up in jail.

The Times of India, August 28, 2020.81

August 26, 2020

Jabalpur, Jabalpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



Seizure by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau supported by the Forest Department and the local police of a jumble of rare species: 9 hemipenis of Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 40 shells of trochus (*Trochus niloticus*), 11 shells of spider conches (genus *Lambis*), pieces of red sandalwood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*, Appendix II) One arrest. WCCB, August 27, 2020. ⁸²

September 8, 2020

Santhur, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

They were spending the weekend in the countryside. In the company of their host, the 4 men were wandering off and took the opportunity to kill an Indian giant squirrel (*Ratufa indica*, Appendix II) and a muntjac (genus *Muntiacus*). They were reported by villagers.

The Times of India, September 9, 2020; The Hindu, September 9, 2020.⁸³

September 8, 2020

Chembur, Mumbai Suburban District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure from a student presenting himself as a "snake rescuer" of an Indian saw-scaled viper (*Echis carinatus*, one of the most dangerous snakes in the world), 2 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix I) and a tarantula.

Press Trust of India, September 9, 2020.84

September 9, 2020 Noida, Gautam Buddh Na

Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure in a grocery shop thanks to information from an NGO of 10 hemipenis of Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 2 claws of owl (Strigidae, Appendix I or II), 8 bones of golden jackal (*Canis aureus*, Appendix I or II), 8 bones of golden jackal (*Canis*

September 10, 2020 Malegaon, Nashik District, State of Maharashtra, India



30 rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*), 2 Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) and a Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), all alive, rescued from trafficking through seizure by the Forest Department supported by WCCB. WCCB, September 14, 2020.⁸⁶

FAMILY AFFAIRS September 10, 2020 Bagalkot, Bagalkot District, State of Karnataka, India

Sanna Eerappa presented himself as inhabited by divine inspiration. "The man of God" used to settle near the temples and sell sea fans to those seeking happiness and prosperity. He advised his flock to hang them on the doors of their homes. As for women wishing maternity, he advised them to set up an altar with hemipenises of Bengal monitors (Varanus bengalensis, Appendix I). The delivery of 503 sea fans and 79 hemipenises policemen who plainclothes presented to themselves as disciples of the "man of God" enabled to catch him red-handed. He was offering the batch for 200,000 rupees or 2,730 US\$. Arrests of Sanna Eerappa Jammanna, Basappa Siddagiri Bilagi, Eerappa Bandeppa Jirali and Pavan Eerappa Jirali. The Times of India, September 11, 2020.87

September 15, 2020 Gudalur, Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India A so-called alternative medicine

doctor held an elephant tusk,



antlers in his dispensary. Outlook India from Press Trust of India, September 16, 2020.88

September 17, 2020 Jabalpur, Jabalpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



Seizure in a car of a leopard skin and a spotted deer (Axis axis) skin. Three arrests.

In their defence, Jitendra Tiwari, Om Prakash Sen and Umesh Patel presented falsified certificates of origin.

The Hitavada, September 19, 2020; WCCB, September 18, 2020.89



FAMILY AFFAIRS September 20, 2020 Tipajhar, Nuapada District, State of Odisha, India



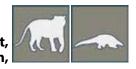
The skull of the leopard was buried. The leopard skin, pangolin parts and wild meat, bows, arrows, traps, batteries and axes, porcupine quills were seized from Shobha Sabar's and Ramkela Bai Sabar's home. A 16-year-old minor was allegedly involved in the poaching.



In Odisha, porcupine quills are used by Brahmins in traditional ceremonies. In the neighbouring State of West Bengal, porcupine quills are used as a talisman by the Birhor tribe to repel insects and favour seed germination. In other Indian states, they are hidden in the house of an enemy to create conflict inside.

The Hindu, September 21, 2020; The New Indian Express, September 20, 2020; S. Chaudhury, H. Singh, Traditional uses of the Indian Crested Porcupine (Hystrix indica Kerr, 1722) by Birhor tribe of Purulia district, West Bengal, March 2016.90

OPERATION WILDNET-3 September 21, 2020 Waidhan, Singrauli Dsitrict, State of Madhya Pradesh, India



Seizure of a leopard skin and 2.3 kg of pangolin scales. Three arrests. Sushil Kushwaha, Sukul Singh alias Guddu and Vijay Gurjar are 20, 24 and 35 years old.

The Hitavada, September 23, 2020; WCCB, September 21, 2020.91



End of September 2020

Vadodara, Vadodara District, State of Gujarat, India

On the basis of information received by the Gujarat Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, about 50 rose-ringed parakeets (Psittacula krameri), Alexandrine parakeets (Psittacula eupatria, Appendix II) and Indian star tortoises (Geochelone elegans, Appendix I) have been released from their cages in private homes.

The Times of India, October 12, 2020.92

PAKISTAN

May 21, 2020

Islamabad, Federal Territory of Islamabad, Pakistan

The shameful zoo of Islamabad

Kaavan, the lonely elephant cloistered in a hardfloored, unshaded cell in the Islamabad Zoo, has been moving the world for 5 years and his fame peaked in May 2020 when the Islamabad High Court found that the capital's zoo was substandard and that the treatment meted out to all the residents amounted to animal cruelty. The court had given the zoo managers 30 days to find, in association with the Sri Lankan authorities, a suitable housing place in Pakistan or another foreign country. Kaavan, now 36, was given by Sri Lanka when he was one year old. Kaavan was the only representative of Elephas maximus in Pakistan since the death of his Sri Lankan partner who arrived in Pakistan in 1990 and died in 2012 for unknown reasons.

... As early as 2016, a transnational petition called for better captivity conditions for Kaavan, first and foremost the right to see, meet and touch other elephants. Being in prison is hard. Not being able to meet fellow inmates is unbearable. Kaavan, in his cage, was suffering from obsessive behavioural disorders and animal psychologists were evoking a mental illness.

On November 30, 2020, Kaavan flew out in an Antonov specialising in transporting heavy loads. Within reach of his trunk, he had 200 kg of plants to feed on during the 7-hour journey and his transport crate was equipped with a drainage device to store up to 200 litres of urine. After arriving at Siem Reap-Angkor International Airport in Cambodia, Kaavan was transported by truck to Kulen Prum Tep Wildlife Sanctuary (215 km) where the day after his arrival he was finally able to touch the trunk of a fellow animal.



Kaavan is on the left

All the animals in the Islamabad zoo did not have the good fortune of Kaavan. The 2 lions of the zoo died at the beginning of August 2020 during their transfer to a breeding farm in Lahore. The police investigation, relying on testimonies and images transmitted through social networks, proves that the zoo's "caretakers" had beaten them with sticks in their enclosure and had lit a fire to plunge them into a lethargic state instead of using anaesthetic syringes. Both lions died of suffocation and asphyxiation. The fate of the Asian black bear (Ursus thibetanus, Appendix I) seized in 2019 and then transferred to Islamabad Zoo (see "On the Trail" n°24 p.64) is uncertain. He would have been entrusted to a shelter outside the metropolis of Islamabad.

Dawn, May 22 and 23, July 8, 18 and 20, August 4 and 12, 2020; Samaa, August 1st; 2020; Free The Wild, August 20 and September 30, 2020; Four Paws, September 2, 2020; NBC News from Associated Press, September 5, 2020; Channel News Asia, September 4, 2020; Daily Sabah from Reuters, September 4, 2020; Gulf News, September 2, 2020; Free Kaavan the Elephant, October 1st; 2020; Evening Standard, October 9, 2020; The Hindu from AFP, December 6, 2020.93

End of August 2020 Lahore, Punjab Province, Pakistan

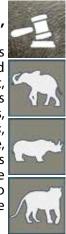
After the circus, the zoo. A hyena (family Hyaenidae), a civet (family Viverridae) and 2 pythons (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) were transferred to the Lahore Zoo after a circus in Kot Lakhpat was closed down by a court decision. Dawn, September 1st, 2020.94

NORTHERN EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

End of August 2020 Burnley, Lancashire County, England, United Kingdom

Sentencing of Aaron Halstead to 56 weeks in prison (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 98 and n°20 p. 128). This masked taxidermist, who was unmasked by the police, was illegally trafficking in stuffed tiger cubs, sperm whale (Physeter macrocephalus, Appendix I) teeth, sawfish (Pristidae, Appendix I) rostrums, rhinoceros horns and trophies, and elephant tusks, one of which, more than 2 m long, is said to be one of the longest ever seized in the United Kingdom.





Halstead had an international network and acted as an intermediary. He sold 4 rhino horns belonging to a Spanish trafficker to Chinese buyers at the port of Calais in France. The transaction was made in cash. He went back to the United Kingdom by car ferry. At the time of the search of his home, 2 other horns were seized in a freezer. He had been purchasing tiger skulls from a Dutch trafficker and shipping them around the world under false designations. In 10 years, Halstead, now 29 years old, has already been involved in 3 wildlife trafficking cases. The UK National Wildlife Crime Unit investigated Halstead's activities for 2 and a half years with the support of Interpol and the Dutch police.

Lancashire Police, August 24, 2020.95

WESTERN EUROPE

GERMANY

September 8, 2020 Near Kronau, Baden-Württemberg State, Germany



The pile-up on Highway 5 had unexpected effects. A hornbill escaped through

an open door and a lion cub was found by the rescue workers in the same car. Coming from Slovakia, the animals were bound for Spain to a questionable zoo. The driver was not in possession of the animals' certificates of origin and the 6-7 week old lioness had been separated from her mother before the end of her nursing period. In default of the accident in Germany, the clandestine wild animals would have been conveyed throughout France. Die Neue Welle, September 15, 2020.⁹⁶



FRANCE

July 7, 2020

Lisieux, Department of Calvados, France

Cerza Zoo is under investigation for animal trafficking. Birds and monkeys must be banded or chipped to certify their legality and to facilitate the search and identification in case of theft or escape. However, the zoo's lawyer and veterinarian say that the bands on the birds' leg are in the long run shredded by the parrots or stolen by traffickers. The park prefers to "chip" the birds, i.e. to clip a microchip under the animal's skin for identification. Similarly, the management has decided not to "chip" monkeys such as macagues from the first month of life. Implanting a microchip would mean abruptly breaking the mother-baby relationship and disturbing the animals as well as the veterinarian or his assistants. To justify the alleged absence of a microchip on a white rhino purchased in 2006 from a South African game reserve, the veterinarian argues that the microchip is as big as a grain of rice and that non-specialist investigators were unable to detect it because of the weight and stature of the pachyderm. The management is tranguil, it says. "There is no trafficking at Cerza, transfers with other zoos have not been the subjects of commercial transactions." According to the park's lawyer, "the problem is that the administration's time does not correspond to the animal's time" and "in some cases, this raises compliance isssues about identification".

Ouest France, July 7, 2020; France Bleu Calvados, July 7, 2020; Le Parisien, July 10, 2020.⁹⁷

August 5, 2020

Méry-sur-Seine, Department of Aube, France

Seizure by the OFB of 4 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II), tarantulas, scorpions and 2 wallabies stuck in a room with open windows and closed shutters.

France 3 Grand Est, August 7, 2020. 98

September 28, 2020 Paris, France

Seizure at the Café de la Gare, a cabaret next to the Beaubourg refinery which was popular in the post-1968 years, of boas (Boidae, Appendix I or II), lizards, American bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*), a scops owl (*Otus scops*, Appendix II), swallows, and several hoopoes (*Upupa epops*). The wildlife slum stank."In terms of insalubrity, it was absolute rubbish" the Brigitte Bardot Foundation says.

Le Parisien, October 1st, 2020.99

NETHERLANDS

REPEATED OFFENSE September 30, 2020 Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The owner of a curiosity shop was sentenced to 80 hours of community service, half of which was suspended, and to 2 years of probation for having offered for sale in 2017 and 2018 a common sawfish rostrum



(Pristis pristis, Appendix I), a stuffed sawfish, a leopard skull (Panthera pardus, Appendix I), whale baleen (Appendix I), a green turtle shell (Chelonia mydas, Appendix I) and a wallet made of turtleshell, 36 fragments of stony coral (Scleractinia, Appendix II), 10 giant clam shells (Tridacnidae, Appendix II), a crocodile skull (Crocodylia spp., Appendix I or II), a stuffed crocodile, python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) and crocodile skin bags, a stuffed western capercaillie (Tetrao urogallus). The faunal catch-all was located on the Marktplaats in Hilversum. "It's the same everywhere on this square", said the convict to justify selling also fruit bats (genus Pteropus), lesser horseshoe bats (Rhinolophus hipposideros) and common pipistrelles (Pipistrellus pipistrellus), all stuffed or reduced to skeleton, and pygmy chameleons (Rhampholeon spp., Appendix II) drown in formalin. Netherlands Council for the Judiciary, October 13, 2020.100

September 27, 2020 Switzerland

The hybrid status of protected but regulated species that a draft law wanted to assign to wolves and ibexes was rejected by 51.93% in a referendum on popular initative promoted by NGOs and so-called left-wing political parties. In the Alpine canton of Valais, where wolves and bobcats are welcomed with open firearms, the draft law was approved by 68.6% of voters.

Swiss Info, September 27, 2020; Le Dauphiné, September 28, 2020.¹⁰¹

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

Early August 2020

Provinces of Segovia, Soria and Burgos, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain

A veterinarian has been charged. He is suspected of having allowed poached meat to be marketed by false certificates. The investigation had begun during the end of the year 2019 when wild boar viscera, deer hooves, roe deer heads and skins had been scattered on roadsides, paths and forests. The Guardia Civil, by analysing clandestine accounting records and tracing carcasses, reached an impressive conclusion proving once again that poaching with guns, traps and bait cages is done on an industrial scale in Spain. 1,001 western roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), 319 wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) and 88 deer bore the costs.

El Norte de Castilla, August 3, 2020.102

ITALY

Early July 2020

Civitanova Marche, Province of Macerata, Marche Region, Italy

The "various skins" came from Switzerland. The customs officers got their money's worth. In the parcels were skins of crocodiles (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), tegus (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II), ostrich and even eels. Corriere Adriatico, July 3, 2020.¹⁰³

Early July 2020

Morovalle, Province of Macerata, Marche Region, Italy

262 kg of skins of python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and sea turtle scutes. The total value is said to be over one million €. The small company had been running for years without being detected by the tax services and CITES nets. A denunciation put an end to the freewheeling.

Corriere Adriatico, July 14, 2020; ANSA, July 14, 2020.¹⁰⁴

September 23, 2020

Bovegno, Province of Brescia, Lombardy Region, Italy



91 traps, dead European robins (*Erithacus*

rubecula) and fat dormice (*Glis glis*). Three rifles, about 100 cartridges. The poacher is charged with hunting with prohibited means, violation of the regulations on protected species and animal abuse.

Valtrompia News, September 24, 2020.105



RUSSIA

End of August 2020 Posiet and Oussouriisk, Primorsky Krai, Russia



Seizure of 225 horns of saiga antelope (Saiga tatarica, Appendix II), 20 claws

and 3 fangs of Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I), preputial glands of musk deer (genus *Moschus*), 2 kg of bear gall bladders and 330 kg of sea cucumbers in the car park of a petrol station and then in the building of a farm. The value of the whole is estimated at 24 million rubles or 325,000 US\$. The shipment was intended for China. Восток-Медиа, August 26, 2020; Новости Владивостока, August 26, 2020; Комсомольская Правда Владивосток, August 27, 2020.¹⁰⁶

September 30, 2020

Plastun, Primorsky Krai, Russia Seizure in a freezer of the butchered carcass of a Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris*)



altaica), a bear head (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) and 7 paws. The animals had been poached over a year ago. One arrest.

Vesti.ru, October 8, 2020; Siberian Times, October 9, 2020.¹⁰⁷



■ VARIOUS MARINE AND FRESHWATER SPECIES

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

August 28, 2020 Garden Route National Park, Western Cape Province, South Africa



SANParks has collected 3.36 km of illegal gillnets in the Touw and Swartvlei estuaries in 36 months. The poachers make them by sewing used together vegetable pockets and use polystyrene and plastic bottles as floats. The passive gear, set at night and left unattended for a long period, traps everything that passes by, adult and juvenile fish, terrapins, otters, great crested grebes. The nets were destroyed by fire. Let's hope that next time the burning of this plastic waste will not take place in the open air.

Dispatch Live, August 31, 2020.1



COLOMBIA

September 24, 2020 Terminal Salitre, Bogotá, Colombia Two arrests at the Salitre bus terminal:

- A 26-year-old foreign national at the arrival of a bus from Cartagena de Indias (1,000 km away). He was carrying, in plastic bags filled with water, 5 sea anemones (genus *Condylactis*), a finescale triggerfish (*Balistes polylepis*) and 2 queen



angelfish (Holacanthus ciliaris), which are popular in aquariums.

- Another 33-year-old man in possession of several cuts of Colombian slider meat (*Trachemys callirostris*). El Tiempo, September 24, 2020.²



Finescale triggerfish, Balistes polylepis



Queen angelfish, Holacanthus ciliaris

ECUADOR

July-August-September 2020 Galápagos Province, Ecuador

The Chinese fleet is back in force on the periphery of Ecuador's Exclusive Economic Zone surrounding the Galapagos Islands. This year, vessels refrained from entering Ecuadorian waters. In 2017, the Fu Yuan Yu Leng 999 was boarded in the marine reserve with more than 6,600 sharks in her holds (see "On the Trail" n°18 p.9). This year, up to 340 vessels were observed in intensive fishing operations, first raking to the point of exhaustion for squid, then for tuna, then for billfish, and probably for sharks, before continuing their work off the coast of South America. Sea products are transhipped at sea on reefers flying the panamean flag and belonging to chinese interests. Some vessels turn off their geolocation system during fishing or transhipment operations. The Ecuadorian Navy's surveillance operations and calls for regional cooperation to safeguard the area's remarkable biodiversity, the balance of marine food chains and local fishery sector have done nothing. Ecuador is not in a strong position. It has a debt of about 6.5 billion US\$ to China.

Reuters, August 9 and 19, 2020; Oceana, September 2020; Los Angeles Times, September 23, 2020.³

September 14, 2020

Caratasca, Department of Gracias a Dios, Honduras

Boarding of a motorboat, the *Tuntun*, and arrest for illegal fishing of Cristofer Steven Simon Davis, Gilberto Robles Tatallon, Wilmer Willians Ramos, Randstad Junior Allen, Kenny Leiva Wilper and Owen Hansack Piner, all Nicaraguans. Authorities seized sea cucumbers, lobsters, crabs, fish and sea snails on board.

La Tribuna, September 14, 2020.⁴

MEXICO

Early July 2020 Querétaro International Airport, State of Querétaro, Mexico



Check of a parcel from Acapulco de Juarez, State of Guerrero on the east coast, and destined for the city of Reynosa, State of Tamaulipas on the west coast on the border with the United States of America. Seizure of 42 swim bladders of totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) and 27 sea cucumbers (class Holothuroidea). Tabasco Hoy, July 4, 2020.⁵



NORTH KOREA

July 2020 North Korea



The common flying squid (*Todarodes pacificus*) are the favourite prey of sperm whales and the favourite dish of hundreds of thousands of human throats in Asia, including Japan, both Korea and China. The international study published in Science Advances builds upon 4 satellite technologies to shed light on a dark side of Chinese deep-sea fishing in the sea of Japan, specifically in North Korean waters. This fishing dazzles the sea with vessels who each have spotlights on top of their masts that are more powerful than several of the ones used in football fields. The Chinese fleet really sock it to the squid and other inhabitants of the sea. The catch of this illuminated fleet together with pelagic trawlers was estimated at 100,000 tonnes in 2017 and 62,000 tonnes in 2018. This decline might be interpreted a sign of the depletion of the squid resource in the North Korean Exclusive Economic Zone. To guard themselves from Chinese supremacy in their waters and to answer to the Kim Jong-un regime's injunctions to avoid food shortages from the sea, the small North Korean boats go fishing in Russian waters, near Vladivostok, risking their physical and legal safety. As for the sperm whales, faced with the predation of squid by industrial fishing, they eat plastic bags.

J. Park, J. Lee, K. Seto, T. Hochberg, B. A. Wong, N. A. Miller, K. Takasaki, H. Kubota, Y. Oozeki, S. Doshi, M. Midzik, Q. Hanich, B. Sullivan, P. Woods, D. A. Kroodsma, Illuminating dark fishing fleets in North Korea. Sci. Adv. 6, eabb1197 (2020).⁶

July 2020 Taiwan

"On the Trail" regularly reports on shark finning and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices on board Taiwanese vessels or with Taiwanese crews (see "On the Trail" n°2 p.5, n°8 p. 8-9, n°14 p.8, n°18 p.9, n°20 p.14, n°22 p.13, n°23 p.11-12 and n°28 p.22). The cases of the *Samudera Pasific n*°8 and the *Berkat Menjala n*°23 wanted by Interpol after escaping from South Africa illustrate the working conditions of Taiwanese sailors reduced to slavery ("On the Trail" n°5 p.3). The trafficking of dolphins for Taiwanese restaurants has also been revealed by the seizures of 820 kg and 7.65 tonnes of meat ("On the Trail" n°2 p.6 and n°4 p.12).

These social and environmental crimes are confirmed by the study of the London-based NGO Environmental Justice Foundation. During 2 years (2018-2019), EJF interviewed crew members of 62 fishing vessels registered in Taiwan or operated by Taiwanese shipowners. Shark finning operations are reported on 31 vessels. On 14 vessels, there were reports of false killer whales (*Pseudorca crassidens*, Appendix II) and dolphins' catches, whose meat is sold or used to bait sharks. These violations of Taiwanese and other landing countries' legislations are associated with exhausting and degrading working conditions.

Environmental Justice Foundation, Illegal fishing and human rights abuses in the Taiwanese fishing fleet, July 2020.⁷





FRANCE

September 11, 2020 Vernon, Department of Eure, France

Five agents from the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) and 2 gendarmes from the river brigade were invited to an auction sale of "naturalist items". The trip was not made in vain: among the various wildlife items, 450 were seized for lack of proof of legal origin. 95% were marine animals, which is rare: sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I),

sharks. corals. seahorses (Hippocampus spp., Appendix II), queen conches (Strombus gigas, Appendix II), nautilus (Nautilus spp., Appendix II), (Tridacna clams Appendix spp., II) ... The remainder consisted of raw and worked ivory from elephant and hippopotamus and stuffed reptiles. French Biodiversity Office, September 23, 2020.8



Porbeagle jaw (Lamna nasus)

OCEANIA

NEW ZEALAND

OPERATION CHEEK August 20, 2020 Wellington, Wellington Region, New Zealand



Sentencing of Hanhui Wu to 6 months

of house arrest from 7.30pm to 6.30am, 100 hours community work and a fine of 6,624 US\$. For more than a year, he bought *Haliotis iris* abalones (pāua in Māori), sea cucumbers and rock lobsters poached in an area closed to commercial fishing from Ola Melesala. " The buyers are what keeps poachers in business and shutting them down will assist us in shutting down the work of the work of poachers" said Steve Ham, National Fisheries Compliance manager.

Melesala was previously sentenced to 7 and a half months house arrest last June. The 400 text messages exchanged between the 2 men show the trafficking of 3,525 abalones, 2,040 sea cucumbers and 57 rock lobsters worth an estimated 15,230 US\$. Wu claimed that the messages were jokes. The court did not appreciate the running gag. Scoop.co.nz, August 7, 2020.⁹

CORALS

ASIA

CHINA

July 13, 2020

Jimo, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 16 pieces of red coral jewellery, 106 g, in an express courier parcel. Four species of corals are listed in Appendix III of CITES in China: *Corallium elatius*, *C. japonicum*, *C. konjoi* and *C. secundum*. Chinese Customs, July 17, 2020.¹

August 13, 2020 Jinan, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of a 5 g red coral bracelet (Appendix III) in a parcel from Japan. Chinese Customs, August 18, 2020.²

Mid-August 2020

Jiangyin, Jiangsu Province, China

The crewman of a merchant ship had brought back in his luggage a 1.61 kg branch of stony coral (order Scleractinia, Appendix II) purchased in South-East Asia. Seizure.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2020.³

SINGAPORE

July 23, 2020

Singapore

Izam Naning had been caught in September 2019 at the ferry terminal checkpoint with live *Goniopora* corals (order Scleractinia, Appendix II). He was arriving from Batam island in Indonesia.



A month later he was sentenced to 2 months in prison. Izam had come to deliver the corals to the owner of an aquarium shop, Yang Tsai Bing, he had met on Facebook. The latter has just been sentenced to 4 weeks in prison.

Channel News Asia, July 23, 2020.4

CRUSTACEANS

AMERICA

BRAZIL

July 8, 2020

Mossoró, State of Río Grande do Norte, Brazil

Night interception of a truck on the BR-304 highway and seizure of 900 kg of lobsters. The driver, the owner of the fishing boat and a crewman were arrested. The cargo came from Maxaranguape and was heading to Aracati.

G1, September 7, 2020.1

August 12, 2020

São Luís, State of Maranhão, Brazil José Carlos dos Santos was sentenced



to one year in prison, with a possibility of adjustment. He was caught in the act

of transporting 2,415 swamp ghost crabs (*Ucides cordatus*) on his boat 10 years ago at the height of the species' reproduction season.

Swamp ghost crabs live in mangroves and are considered a sentinel species because of their susceptibility to chemical compounds. Imirante, August 20, 2020.²

CUBA

Early July 2020 Isla de la Juventud, Cuba

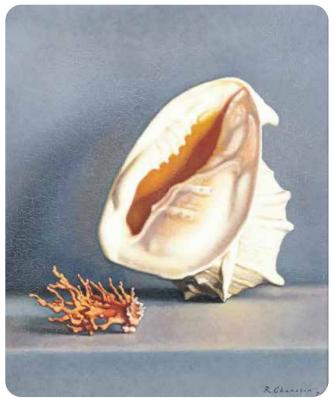
Arrest of 5 poachers carrying 147 Caribbean spiny lobster tails (*Panulirus argus*), 10 kg of fish and 9 kg of crab. The seafood products, which are normally for export only or for tourist hotels and restaurants, were allegedly caught in a UNESCO reserve. The publicity given to this seizure is a subject of debate. The administration, with the help of the official television, is accused of blaming the shortage and the country's critical economic situation on offenders of the Covid-19 measures and on all sorts traffickers.

CiberCuba, July 5, 2020.3



Swamp ghost crab, Ucides cordatus

CLAMS



Still-life with seashell and coral, René Chancrin (1911-1981)



CHINA

August 7, 2020

Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China Seizure by Customs of 2 scaly clams (*Tridacna squamosa*, Appendix II) of 151 g. Chinese Customs, August 13, 2020.¹



August 12, 2020 Kunming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China

Seizure by customs of 4 giant clam shells (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) weighing 5,058.5 g and 2 giant helmet shells (*Cassis cornuta*) weighing 356.92 g in the luggage of a Chinese passenger from Cambodia.

Chinese Customs, August 14, 2020.²



September 4, 2020 Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 4 necklaces of southern giant clam beads (*Tridacna derasa*, Appendix II) with a total weight of 220 g. The package was said to contain wooden bracelets.

Chinese Customs, September 10, 2020.³

ABALONES

Haliotis spp.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early July 2020

Gansbaai, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Officers from the private security company Core Tactical Services were on stakeout following a tipoff from a member of the local community. They were unable to arrest the men with suspicious movements but seized a bag full of abalone. Core Tactical Services, July 2, 2020.1



July 14, 2020

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

The seizure of 41 pieces of rhino horn (see page 44) encouraged the South African Revenue Service to search the airport warehouse from top to bottom. Abalone destined for Hong Kong and ephedrine hidden in printer cartridges destined for Madagascar, were found.

APA-Johannesburg, July 14, 2020.²

July 16, 2020

Gansbaai, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Seizure of 3 bags filled with 858 abalones. Core Tactical Services, July 17, 2020.³

July 16, 2020 **Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**



Seizure of 12,300 abalones with an estimated value of 203,000 US\$ (16.5 US\$/abalone) in an illegal cooking-drying facility. Arrest of a man.

Anti-Poaching Abalone Western Cape, July 16, 2020.4

July 16, 2020

Overstrand, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Joint operation by the private security companies Core Tactical Services and Secma Security with support from SAPS. Six men were caught in the bush shelling and weighing abalone. Two were overpowered and 1,260 specimens were seized. Core Tactical Services, July 17, 2020.⁵

July 18, 2020

Overberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of 1,122 abalones and 2 arrests by a private company stationed at strategic points on the coastal routes used by poachers. Core Tactical Services, July 18, 2020.6

July 23, 2020

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

They were walking with wheeled suitcases. Nothing suspicious except when water flows. Arrest with the help of Dark Water Ops of the 2 traffickers and seizure of 138 abalones. SAPS, July 24, 2020.7

July 25, 2020 Overstrand, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Two men are spotted with 2 plastic bags over their shoulders. They fled when the patrol was close at hand. Seizure of 192 abalones. Core Tactical Services, July 25, 2020.8

End of July 2020

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

In the nature reserve, 2 men were spotted. They fled and left 2 backpacks containing 158 abalones. Dark Water Ops, July 21, 2020.9

July 23, 2020

Overberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa

The poacher was roaming the rocks. The officers spotted his bag. In it were 67 abalones. Core Tactical Services, July 24, 2020.¹⁰

August 5, 2020

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of abalone with an estimated value of 179,000 US\$. Arrest of 2 men. SAPS, August 6, 2020.11

June-August 2020

Overberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa

The tension takes up a notch between abalone gangs and local communities (see "On the Trail" n°27 p.7). The increase in legal fishing quotas has done nothing to change this (see "On the Trail" n°25 p.7). Neil Coetzee, a resident of Betty's Bay, is suspected of shooting a poacher on August 2. No one was injured. The attempted murder charge has been suspended pending ballistics analysis. The Betty's Bay coastline is part of the UNESCO Kogelberg biosphere reserve. Residents' testimonials of the daily sweep of the area by dozens of divers operating in broad daylight are overwhelming. The poachers intimidate them by mimicking a throat cutting. Coetzee has allegedly already had an altercation with looters who tried to run him over in a car. Locals denounce the impunity enjoyed by the gangs and have created a WhatsApp group devoted for sharing information about their movements. The authorities are once again pinpointed for the lack of a proportionate response. The reserve's chairman admits that "the level of poaching is way beyond the capacity of any of our law-enforcement authorities to control". This was confirmed by Cape Nature. The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment denies the accusations and puts forward a seizure of more than 13,000 abalones in June together with the dismantling of a clandestine workshop and the arrest of 13 people since April. However, it is acknowledged that poachers have taken advantage of the Covid-19 lockdown to deploy on the ground.

News 24, August 5, 2020 ; Cape Talk, August 6, 2020.¹²

August 19, 2020

Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

The man was travelling from Cape Town by Intercity Express bus with suspicious luggage. The alert was raised. Taking advantage of a stop at a petrol station, he unloaded his 18 cardboard boxes which were picked up by a Toyota Fortuna. The vehicle was followed to a residence in the MayFair suburb. Seizure of dried abalone worth an estimated 180,000 US\$.

SAPS, August 21, 2020.13

August 26, 2020 **Bergrivier, Western Cape Province, South Africa**



The control of the 2 cars which, according to the information received, were transporting abalone, was unsuccessful. They were decoys to divert the officers from a third vehicle that was actually transporting more than 1,606 abalones. The trick did not work.

SAPS, August 27, 2020.14

September 9, 2020

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa Control of a Toyota Corolla on the N2 in the Nyanga township. Seizure of 328 abalones and arrest of the 35-year-old driver, residing in Paarl (60 km away). SAPS, September 10, 2020.¹⁵

September 9, 2020

Gansbaai, Western Cape Province, South Africa



Joint operation of the Core Tactical Services and the forces of law between 7 and 9 pm. Discovery of 6 abandoned bags near the Danger Point lighthouse. They contained 774 abalones, 310 of which were shelled.

Core Tactical Services, September 10, 2020.¹⁶

September 17 and November 25, 2020 Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa



- Indictment of Denver Langehoven and Solomon Sauls, abalone traffickers.

They are charged with racketeering, corruption, defeating the ends of justice and pillage of marine resources. Sauls' name appears in the case of the crooks of Gansbaai (see n°20 p. 9).

- Conviction of Langehoven to 14 years in prison for violations of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA), 10 years in prison for violations of the Marine Living Resources Act (MLRA) and 3 years in prison for fraudulent acts. The sentences run concurrently.

- Conviction of Sauls to 7 years for POCA violations and 2 years for MLRA violations. The 2 sentences run concurrently. Sauls is already serving a 14-year prison sentence for another abalone trafficking case.

Eyewitness News, September 19, 2020 ; IOL, September 22, 2020 ; SAPS, November 25, 2020.¹⁷



FRANCE

September 20, 2020 Saint-Georges-de-la-Rivière, Department of Manche, France

On equinoctial tides, the beaches are covered with fishermen on foot looking for shellfish. Out of 83 controls, 12 resulted in a penalty. One of the offenders had harvested 14 undersized abalones. La Manche libre, September 21, 2020.¹⁸



Overberg, South Africa, poached abalone shells and other waste dumped by gangs near the shoreline.

SEA CUCUMBERS

Holothuria fuscogilva, Holothuria nobilis and Holothuria whitmaei (teatfish): Appendix II. Isostichopus fuscus: Appendix III in Ecuador.

(ASIA)

INDIA

August 13, 2020

Agatti Island, Lakshadweep District, Union Territory of Lakshadweep, India

The archipelagos Sea Cucumber Protection Task Force unearthed a 30-litre plastic drum containing 51.5 kg of sea cucumbers for 54 specimens on a beach near the airport. The shipment is valued at 134,400 US\$ (i.e. 2,609 US\$/kg or 2,488 US\$/ specimen). The size of the animals indicates that they were probably caught on other islands in the archipelago. The consignment ready to be shipped to the international market is believed to be part of a series of 6 other shipments.

The Lakshadweep islands are a poaching hot-spot despite the recent establishment of a no-go zone for sea cucumbers protection around Cheriyapani Atoll (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.14). The Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has provided a budget of 366,000 US\$ for the fiscal year 2020-21 to form the Lakshadweep Marine Wildlife Protection Force. 350 observers should be spread out on the 10 islands and 3 anti-poaching camps set up on the uninhabited islands of Veliyapani, Thinnakkara and Suheli.

The Times of India, August 15, 2020 ; Hindustan Times, August 15, 2020.¹

August 29, 2020

Indian Territorial Seas, Gulf of Mannar, India

The Coast Guard, in coordination with air assets, apprehended a vessel with almost one t of sea cucumbers on board. It is believed to belong to Sayed Kasim, a poacher well known to the services. He was not on board and only 3 sailors were apprehended. The operation took place near the international maritime boundary line with Sri Lanka, where the cargo was to be transported. The Coast Guard estimates the value of the seizure at 672 US\$/kg and the Forest Department at a maximum of 135 US\$/kg.

Asia Pacific News, August 30, 2020 ; The Times of India, August 29, 2020.²

September 3, 2020

Agatti Island, Lakshadweep District, Union Territory of Lakshadweep, India

Forty-one sea cucumbers were found during a beach clean-up operation. They were indeed plastic bags under the sand, but not waste: their contents are estimated at 320,000 rupees (4,372 US\$). The sea cucumbers were processed and impregnated with a powdered preservative of Sri Lankan origin. They were probably destined for China via cities such as Kochi, Mumbai and Bangalore, and then via Sri Lanka. Notably, this is the first time that sea cucumbers have been seized during the monsoon season.

... The hideout was one more time in the immediate vicinity of air and sea transports. The chief wildlife warden regrets that the plastic packaging provided to the public to preserve fishery products was being diverted for illegal activities. " Large consignments [6 to 10 tons] are packed together in watertight material and dropped in international waters. [...] Divers from large ships collect these shipments from these locations, and funds are simultaneously transferred through illegal web networks " he says. A team from the Central Bureau of Investigation was due to arrive on March 28 to investigate on the spot the seizure of 1,716 sea cucumbers in the archipelago (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.14). Its arrival was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Hindustan Times, September 5, 2020.³

September 19, 2020 Off Pamban, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 750 kg of sea cucumbers in cloth bags among other bags containing 400 kg of turmeric on board a ship by the marine police. The total value of the consignment is estimated at 5 million rupees (68,310 US\$). Arrest of the 3 suspects. They intended to deliver their cargo to Sri Lanka and come back with another illegal shipment, this time gold.

Outlook India, September 20, 2020.⁴

SRI LANKA

July 7, 2020 Muddalampiddy, Northern Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure of a dinghy, 22 sea cucumbers and diving equipment. Arrest of 9 men aged between 26 and 60 years.

Sri Lanka Navy, July 8, 2020.⁵



SAMOA

Early July 2020 Samoa

Chen Pao was convicted of poaching sea cucumbers, illegally operating a seafood processing establishment



and attempting to smuggle them. In April 2019, 431kg of sea cucumbers worth 341,000 US\$ on the international market had been seized from the Treasure Garden hotel in Savalalo and the Treasure Garden restaurant in Fugalei which Chen owns. He was sentenced to a one year jail or to pay 1,500 US\$ and to a fine of 2,500 US\$. His lawyer was ready to appeal. The sentence is not worth it. Radio New Zealand, July 9, 2020.⁶

SEAHORSES

Hippocampus spp., Appendix II



CHINA

August 6, 2020

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

On the control panel, long curly shadows were appearing. Seizure of 292 seahorses, 507 g. A strong smell of fish spread at the opening of the postal parcel sent from Malaysia and declared to contain "dry food". The gloved and masked customs officers remind that : " To protect wild animals is to protect human beings themselves".

Chinese Customs, August 9, 2020.1

August 6, 2020

Shatoujiao, Guangdong Province, China

Control in the boot of a car, Zhongying Street. Seizure of 199 seahorses, 0.51 kg, and 210 pipefish (genus *Syngnathus*), 0.49kg. Chinese Customs, August 20, 2020.²





September 2020 Xiamen, Fujian Province, China

Seizure of 17,768 dried seahorses, slightly more than 36 kg in all, and arrest of 2 suspects. Chinese Customs, September 16, 2020.³



September 14, 2020 Gongbei border post, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.

The passenger had placed herself in the "nothing to declare" lane. After letting her pass without difficulty, the customs officers changed their minds. In her handbag and shopping bag, they found 2 packets of dried seahorses weighing 1 kg. Chinese Customs, September 17, 2020.⁴



SPAIN

Mid-August 2020

Las Canteras, Gran Canaria, Province of Las Palmas, Autnomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

Above the beer barrels, behind the counter of the "Hong Kong" restaurant run by Jiangme L. and Yanquiang Z., the health inspection service had found in June 2019 a bag containing 49 seahorses and 2 pipefish (genus *Syngnathus*). The prosecutor is now requesting a fine of $10,800 \in (12,700 \text{ US}\$)$ and a ban on hunting and fishing for 4 years. The "Hong Kong" is only a few metres from the beach. Canarias7, August 17, 2020.⁵

MARINE OR FRESHWATER FISH INCLUDING SHARKS AND EELS

AFRICA

BENIN

Mid-September 2020 Cotonou Cadjehoun Airport, Littoral Department, Bénin

In June 2020, about 20 officers from the Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo followed a training course on wildlife crime and CITES regulations. Implementation has been effective:

- Seizure in the freight area of 212 shark fins weighing 50.5 kg from the Republic of Congo and bound for Ghana.

- Seizure of 106 shark fins including ones of shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*, Appendix II), thresher shark (*Alopias vulpinus*, Appendix II), hammerhead shark (family Sphy-



rnidae, 3 species in Appendix II) and silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II), from Pointe-Noire, Republic of Congo. A man was responsible for retrieving the unaccompanied luggage and transporting them by road to Ghana. The fins were then destined for Asia. The suspect was arrested and sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of 200,000 CFA francs (364 US\$).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, September 18 and November 10, 2020 ; Born Free USA, March 16, 2021.¹



BOTSWANA

July 5, 2020 Botswana

According to the International Trade Centre and the United Nations Comtrade database, Botswana exported 17 million pula (1,444,465 US\$) worth of shark fins between 2015 and 2020. But where do they come from, as the country has no access to the sea? And where do they go? The reported countries of destination are mainly South Africa and Zambia. But South Africa does not record such imports. «It's shocking that in 2015, Botswana was second only to Brazil in terms of shark fin exports. We do not really know how that happened" says Moeme Batshabang, acting deputy director of Botswana's Department of Wildlife and National Parks. However, he says smuggling does not bear the sole responsibility: it could be partly due to errors in the choice of heading when exporting the products. News 24, July 5, 2020.²

GABON

OPERATION ALBACORE V August 8, 2020

Port of Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Boarding of 2 trawlers by Gabonese Navy and Sea Shepherd's *Bob Barker*:

- on board the *Guo Ji 826*, inspectors find rays of 2 species, one of which had its fins cut off, and 5 tonnes of rough-head sea catfish (*Arius latiscutatus*), all species prohibited from fishing in Gabon.

- on board the *Guoji 866*, another finding of ray fins, hidden under cardboard boxes of fish in the refrigerated hold.

The 2 vessels were escorted to the port of Libreville. After extensive searches at the quayside, the total weight of the seizure amounts to 800 kg of rays (40 boxes) and 260 kg of fins (13 boxes), including fins of Daisy stingrays (*Fontitrygon margarita*), an endemic ray to West Africa.

Sea Shepherd, August 17 and 25, 2020.³

July 31, 2020

Macaneta, Maputo Province, Mozambique

Seizure of 98 kg of manta ray (*Manta* spp., Appendix II) meat. The seizure will be sold in the coming days and the money collected should go to the government coffers. O País, August 3, 2020.⁴

SEYCHELLES

July 16, 2020 Port Victoria, Seychelles



After being spotted by a maritime patrol aircraft, a fishing vessel is diverted to Port Victoria. Suspected of illegal fishing, the

7 crew members of Sri Lanka origin have undergone quarantine for 14 days inside their vessel in application of Covid-19 guidelines. The Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA) ensured that no catch was thrown at sea during this quarantine. In the end, 6.9 t of sharks were found on board. The vessel was seized and the owner fined 17,000 US\$. As for the seamen, they were asked to return home, with the plane tickets paid by their employers.

The SFA notes an acceleration of illegal fishing involving Sri Lankan flagged vessels, particularly during the south-east monsoon season when the sea is rough and patrols are scarce.

Seychelles News Agency, August 12, 2020 ; La 1^{ère}, August 17, 2020.⁵

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

August 31, 2020

State of Hawaii, United States of America

Follow up of the case of the 95 kg of fins seized at Hawaii airport in the luggage of 10 Indonesian sailors newly disembarked from the *M.V. Kyoshin Maru No. 20* (see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 12). After the indictment of the 10 sailors, the ship's captain, the fishing master and the chief engineer, it is now the turn of the shipowner, Hamada Suisan Co. Ltd, to be charged. The company is accused of aiding and abetting the attempted export of shark fins from Hawaii in violation of the Lacey Act. US Department of Justice, August 31, 2020.⁶

OPERATION APEX September 2020 Florida, California and Georgia, United States of

America Twenty-two searches. Arrest of 12 individuals, seizure of 18 swim bladders of totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) also known as "cocaine of the sea" because of their high price, 18,000 marijuana plants, 8 million US\$ in cash, gold, silver and other precious metals worth 3 million US\$ and diamonds worth one million US\$. The secret organisation's accounts reveal that 2 shipments to Hong Kong of 5,670 kg of shark fins worth 223,565 US\$ or 39.5 US\$/kg were made in 2016 and 2017. This is one more proof that on the American continent wildlife trafficking goes hand-in-hand with drug trafficking and money laundering.

The snake had 2 heads:

- Phoenix Fisheries run by Mark Leon Harrison in Panama City, Florida, where, under certain conditions, the import and sale of shark fins were previously permitted. Phoenix took advantage of this hole in the nets to import fins from Mexico. However, the quantities were such that the attention and suspicions of the US Fish and Wildlife were soon triggered. The investigation began 5 years ago.

- Serendipity Business Solutions based in Burlingame, California, where the import, export and sale of shark fins have been banned since 1991. Phoenix Fisheries was the front company for Serendipity Business Solutions, which means "the gift of making finds and turning them into business". The director of the trick's bag is called Terry Xing Zhao Wu. The profits from the sale of shark fins and totoaba swim bladders were transferred in cash from Florida to California and used to fund purchases of marijuana. Coming from California's West Coast, it supplied the Georgia East Coast market.

"Make no mistake: we've hit them where it hurts and we have them on the ropes," said the US Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia in his colorful language.

The law banning the import, export and sale of shark fins in Florida was signed by Governor DeSantis under the name of Kristin Jacobs Ocean Conservation Act, after a politician engaged in favour of environment and wildlife protection. It went into effect on October 1st, 2020.

US Department of Justice, September 3, 2020; The South China Morning Post, September 4, 2020; Mongabay, September 26, 2020.⁷

FAMILY AFFAIRS September 8, 2020 Waimea, State of Hawaii, United States of America



Sentencing of Tyron Terazono to a fine of 5,500 US\$ and a 30-day prison sentence, suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic, for catching 550 aquarium fish valued at over 37,000 US\$. His boat, the *Masako*, was inspected on February 20, 2020. Two other people were on board. Kacie Terazono was not charged and Wayne Newman was fined 200 US\$ on June 2 (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.170). Tyron Terazono escaped jail thanks to the Covid-19

circumstances.

West Hawaii Today, September 9, 2020.8

FAMILY AFFAIRS September 10, 2020 State of Minnesota United S

State of Minnesota, United States of America

Indictment of Robert Dale Latourell, Melinda May Latourell and Melissa Ann Latourell for violating the Lacey Act. Operators of a resort, they offered canoe trips and boat towing services in Portage la Prairie on the border with Canada. They took advantage of their privileged access to Canadian waters to catch lake ciscoes (*Coregonus artedi*) between October 2012 and December 2016 in the protected Quetico provincial park (Ontario province). They then sold them as bait in Minnesota. Their profits are estimated at several thousand dollars. Lake ciscoes are about 30 cm long. They live in Canada and the northern United States.

US Department of Justice, September 10, 2020.9



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LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

OPERATION COTA ZERO July 5, 2020



Monte Santo, State of Tocantins, Brazil The operation conducted by the Instituto Natureza do Tocantins (Naturatins) and

the Environmental Military Police aims to prevent and reduce crimes against wildlife, in particular fishing on the Araguaia River and its tributaries and the illegal transport of fish. Review of the day: one caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II) and 101 kg of fish, including butterfly peacock bass (*Cichla ocellaris*) and threespot leporinus (*Leporinus friderici*). A total of 1,240 US\$ in fines was imposed. The fish were donated to charity while the caiman was incinerated.

Pesca Amadora, July 9,2020.¹⁰

OPERATION PLATAFORMA July 21, 2020

Port of Itajaí, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil

Seizure of 75 tonnes of illegally caught fish around an oil platform in the Santos basin. The vessel had been reported and monitored until she arrived in port. The Ibama recalls that there is a risk of accidents and environmental damage if a boat collides with a platform and that fishing is therefore prohibited within a radius of 500 m.

G1, July 24, 2020 ; Pesca Amadora, July 24, 2020.11

OPERATION HORUS August 20, 2020 Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Almost one tonne of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) seized from a boat at the fishing terminal. The captain was arrested for failing to produce documents demonstrating the legal origin of the "merchandise".

G1, August 20, 2020.12

September 9, 2020

Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Arrest of a Fiat Strada at the entrance to the AM-070 highway and a Ford F-250. Seizure of 36 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and 650 kg of catfish (order Siluriformes), including piracatinga (*Calophysus macropterus*). Arrest of the 2 drivers. G1, September 9, 2020.¹³

MEXICO

Mid-July 2020

Cancún International Airport, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico

While inspecting a storage area of an air company, the Guardia Nacional sees a package with a strong fishy smell. Inside were 27 swim bladders of totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I). According to the travel documents, the package was sent from Hermosillo, Sonora State. Big Fish, July 13, 2020.¹⁴

Mid-August 2020

Ojos Negros, State of Baja California, Mexico

Inspection by soldiers of a white van without a registration plate. In the back of the vehicle: a cooler containing 37 swim bladders of totoabas (30 kg). Arrest of the driver, a certain Adrian "N". Estimated value: 472,000 US\$, or 15,730 US\$/kg.

Sin Embargo, August 20, 2020 ; Hiptex, August 19, 2020.¹⁵

September 22 and 24, 2020 Province of Zarumilla, and Tumbes, Province of Tumbes, Department of Tumbes, Peru

- After the refrigerated lorries were examined with an infrared camera, customs seized 8 t of great hammerheadsharks(*Sphyrnamokarran*, AppendixII) and bigeye thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*, Appendix II). The shipment came from Ecuador (30 km away) and was to be sold in the department. On the local market, one kilo of these sharks sells for 7 US\$.



- Two days later, another seizure of sharks from Ecuador, this time 11 t: hammerhead sharks (family Sphyrnidae, 3 species in Appendix II), bigeye thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*, Appendix II) and shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*, Appendix II). The shipment is estimated at 200,000 soles or 60,000 US\$ (5.5 US\$/kg on average). The fish will be distributed to the most needy inhabitants.

In both cases, the fins had been cut off to be sent to Asia. At the beginning of May, 26 t of shark fins from Ecuador were seized in Hong Kong (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.173) and trafficking between Peru and Asia is persistent.

El Comercio, September 23, 2020 ; El Universo, September 23, 2020 ; EFEAGRO, September 25, 2020.¹⁶

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

July 8, 2020 Hong Kong Interna

Hong Kong International Airport, China

The 32 boxes from the Netherlands contained 220 kg of toothfish (genus *Dissostichus*). Value estimated at 15,500 US\$ (70 US\$/kg). It is prohibited to import, export or re-export toothfish, except if specially authorised



by the Director of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. Hong Kong Customs, July 9, 2020.¹⁷

August 20, 2020 Shunde District, Guangdong Province, China

The smuggling of European glass eels to China has become a classic case of trafficking. Glass eels from the estuaries of Portugal, Spain and France end up in farms in China when they are not seized at airports. Eels of European origin are likely to be legally re-exported from China after fattening in the breeding ponds. The Shunde Herong Food Co. Ltd is exporting a 187.3 tonne batch of smoked eels after Russia lifted its Covid-19 restrictions on the import of Chinese aquaculture products. Chinese Customs, August 27,2020.¹⁸

Mid-September 2020

Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport, Fujian Province, China



Seizure of 80 freshwater stingrays endemic to South America (genus *Potamotrygon*, 25 species listed in Appendix III in several South American countries). Rays of the genus *Potamotrygon* are known for their dangerous venom, which does not prevent them from being appreciated by some aquarium lovers. *Potamotrygon*, see "On the Trail" n°8 p. 4, n°16 p. 8, n°17 p. 9, n°19 p. 10-11 and n°28 p. 21). Chinese Customs, September 24, 2020.¹⁹

TAIWAN

July 16, 2020 Taiwan

The Fisheries Agency prohibits fishing for great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*, Appendix II), basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*, Appendix II) and megamouth shark (*Megachasma pelagios*). In case of bycatch, the specimens must be discarded at sea, whether dead or alive. This applies to all vessels registered in Taiwan, regardless of their fishing areas. However, scientific fishing remains authorised by way of derogation. Taipei Times, July 18, 2020.²⁰

July 28-August 12, 2020 Taiwan

Seizure of 19 kg of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders and arrest of a man who was receiving them by post from Mexico and shipping them to China. The United States, through the FBI, cooperated in the investigation. Estimated value: 900,000 US\$, 47,370 US\$/kg. Channel News Asia, August 24, 2020.²¹

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

MALAYSIA

Week of July 20, 2020 Fish market in Donggongon, State of Sabah, Malaysia

On the wharves, a 100 kg giant devil ray (Mobula mobular, Appendix II) has been sold to a fishmonger for the equivalent of 300 US\$ or 3 US\$/kg. Another fishmonger says that a giant manta ray (Manta birostris, Appendix II) sells for the equivalent of 4.6 US\$/kg.

Daily Express, July 22, 2020.22

July 28, 2020

Kuala Lumpur International Airport, State of Selangor, Malaysia

Seizure of 600 Asian arawonas (*Scleropages formosus*, Appendix I) destined for China. Microchip codes and CITES documents do not match. Value estimated at 50,365 US\$ (84 US\$/specimen). The Star, July 31, 2020.²³

SOUTHERN ASIA

BANGLADESH

July 18, 2020

Chittagong Kotwali, Chittagong District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh

The Rapid Action Battalion, informed of oil smuggling, stops a truck to search it and finds drums containing 3,600 litres of oil... of shark inside. Estimated value: 2.1 million takas or 24,750 US\$ and 6.9 US\$/l. Arrest of Rashed, Kazi Soel and Sagar. A 4th man named Kader succeded in escaping. He was in charge of exporting the "oil" out of the country.

The Daily Star, July 19, 2020.24

INDIA

August 12-17, 2020

Sassoon Dock, Mumbay City District, State of Maharashtra, India

A 7.62 m long female whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) accidentally caught in a fishing net was brought to port. Fins and 30 cm long "steaks" were cut off. Two men are arrested: Jan Bahadur Yadav, a fish trader who allegedly bought the whale shark for a paltry sum and Sham Rajaram Dhar, who transported the meat. They will help to arrest Dilip Hari Sivakar and Gopinath Damodar Mhatre, fishermen and owners of the boat, and Krishna Buchade, a buyer-butcher. They were released on bail of 5,000 rupees (70 US\$) and were required to report every Saturday between 3 pm and 5 pm to the forest department officer in charge of the case. Protected under Wildlife Protection Act, such fish has to be put back at sea dead or alive.

Hindustan Times, August 18, 2020; The Times of India, August 12, 14 and 19, 2020; The Indian Express, August 18, 2020.²⁵



CYPRUS

August 2020

Cyprus

August seizure review: 65.6 kg of sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II), 36,180 cigarettes, 107.775 kg of tobacco, 10,336 counterfeit items and 3 vehicles.

Cyprus Customs, September 7, 2020.²⁶

YEMEN

September 2020 (detention of the vessel) Port of Al Mukalla, Hadhramaut Governorate, Yemen

The *Cobija* is in Mukalla, the Yemeni port open to the Indian Ocean. This pirate toothfish fishing vessel is believed to be Spanish-owned. In June 2020, the Australian Coast Guard during a regulatory inspection triggered after an aerial survey discovered flags of Angola, Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Panama, Peru, Singapore, South Africa and Spain on board the *Cobija*. The *Cobija* (ex-*Cape Flower*, ex-*Cape Wrath*), IMO 1330399, could thus change flag according to the necessities. The *Cobija* is a chameleon of the seas wanted by Interpol.

Stop Illegal Fishing (2020) FISH-i Africa Investigation 22. Cobija exploits weak states to escape sanctions.²⁷

WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

REPEATED OFFENSE July 3-4, 2020

Saint-Malo, Department of Ille-et-Vilaine, France

Two men of Belgian nationality were caught redhanded at 2.30 am in the Bouvet Basin, a remote area of the port far from video surveillance cameras. They had been spotted for a few days by the Gendarmerie Maritime, who had set up a nighttime surveillance. The gendarmes seize 2 kg of live glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), 13 kg of gutted eels, 10 rods and 2 rod holders. The live eels are released back into the water while the others are destroyed. One of the 2 poachers, a fishmonger, is already known to the gendarmes for similar acts committed in 2008 and again in 2011.

Ouest France, July 7, 2020 ; Le Pays Malouin, July 11, 2020.²⁸

September 15, 2020

Vitry-sur-Seine, Department of Val-de-Marne, France

After Intermarché (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.175) in May, it is now Leclerc's turn, an another major player in the hypermarkets branch, to sell a thresher shark (*Alopias vulpinus*, Appendix II). Following the reactions of several customers, the management stated that the species was on its blacklist and that "the shop concerned made a mistake".

94 Citoyens, September 17, 2020.29

September 29, 2020

Narbonne, Department of Aude, France

Arrest of 3 captains and their crews, all nonprofessionals, for non-compliance with the regulations on bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) fishing. Seizure of the equipment and the crafts. Bluefin tuna fishing is regulated by quotas and subject to the use of single-use marking rings. La Dépêche, October 2, 2020.³⁰

SOUTHERN EUROPE

SPAIN

Early July 2020

Mar Menor, Autonomous Community of Murcia, Spain

Seizure of 180 kg of live eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II). They were prisoners in 4 fishing traps in front of the yacht club and near the fish market. Four people were arrested.

La Opinión de Murcia, July 10, 2020.³¹

September 15, 2020

Ports of Altea and Villajoyosa, Province of Alicante, Valencian Community, Spain

- Seizure of 180 kg of undersized hake (genus *Merluccius*) offered for sale.

- Night seizure on a boat of 3 bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) weighing 150 kg that fishermen were trying to sell to a wholesaler.

They were handed over to a charity after sanitary control.

Diario de Alicante, September 19, 2020.³²

ITALY

Around September 18, 2020 Ortona, Province of Chieti, Abbruzzo Region, Italy

Seizure of a bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) weighing 52 kg out of quota on board a fishing vessel. It was donated to a charitable organisation in the nearby town of Lanciano.

Abruzzo Live, September 18, 2020.33

PORTUGAL

July 3, 2020 Leiria, District of Leiria, Portugal

Seizure of 113 kg of frozen glass eels (Anguilla anguilla, Appendix II) in a car on the A17 motorway towards Lisbon. The seizure is valued locally at 56,000 \in or 496 \in /kg by the GNR (Guarda Nacional Republicana). In one kilo, there are at least 3,350 glass eels.

Região de Leiria, July 4, 2020.³⁴



RUSSIA

September 9, 2020 Slyudyansky District, Irkutsk Oblast, Russia

Seizure during the inspection of a truck of 400 kg of sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) valued at 20 million rubles, i.e. 268,886 US\$ (672 US\$/kg). The driver was arrested. Вести.ru, September 9, 2020.³⁵



MARINE TURTLES

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

NORTHERN AFRICA

TUNISIA

July 13, 2020

Monastir, Monastir Governorate, Tunisia

The report in Sfax of a sale of sea turtle meat was not isolated. Tongues are loosened. Similar offences have been identified in other governorates. Sea turtles are sold here and there on the roadside. The city of Monastir responds. This is a first in Tunisia. "Any person who catches, sells or transports a sea turtle in the territorial zone of the city of Monastir will be punished with a fine of one thousand dinars [349 US\$]."

Webdo, July 13, 2020.1

EASTERN AFRICA

FRANCE (MAYOTTE)

September 1st, 2020

Department of Mayotte, France An octopus fisherman ran into a sea turtle on the beach of Mtsangadoua. It did not survive the encounter. A resident



who witnessed the scene alerted the police, who caught him cutting up the shell.

He was sentenced to one year's imprisonment with 24 months of probation, 210 hours of community work and ordered to pay 2,000 \in (1,678.5 US\$) in damages and 750 \in (629 US\$) in legal fees to the civil parties. The Oulanga na Nyamba association is pleased that turtle poaching is now punished. Mayotte la 1^{ère}, September 1st, 2020.²

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Early August 2020 Miami International Airport, State of Florida, United States of America

Seizure of 1,400 turtle scutes. This is perhaps the largest seizure of this kind at the airport. The shipment came from the Caribbean and was headed for Asia."It took probably 100 sea turtles to be killed to make this illegal shipment happen," says Eva Lara, a US Fish and Wildlife Service inspector. The scutes were painted blue to make them look like plastic for recycling.

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Áugust 13, 2020; WSVN 7News, August 13, 2020.³





LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN)

BARBADOS

September 7, 2020 Barbados



A turtle that came to lay eggs on a beach was savagely beaten. Two tourists brought it to the Barbados Sea Turtle Project of the University of the West Indies. At the death's door, it managed to lay 124 eggs. It was then finished off and its eggs buried in the sand.

Pet Rescue Report, September 8, 2020.4

COLOMBIA

Early August 2020 Cartagena, Department of Bolívar, Colombia



Seizure of 125 pieces of jewellery made from hawksbill turtle shells near the Los

Ejecutivos shopping centre. The itinerant trader had to pay a fine. The amount is not disclosed. The items were allegedly manufactured on the Rosario Islands.

Caracol Radio, August 6, 2020.⁵

MEXICO

July 15, 2020 Tehuantepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico



Nice catch at the crossroads of the old San Luis Rey road and the Salina Cruz-La Ventosa highway. Seizure of 25,000 eggs distributed in 50 black plastic bags in the pick-up truck. El Universal, July 16, 2020.⁶

Early August 2020 Chahuites, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

Elfi Rosmery "N", the taxi driver, was carrying unusual customers on the coastal road. Seizure of 2,816 eggs in the trunk of the Volkswagen. Cuarto Poder, August 9, 2020.⁷

Mid-August 2020 Mexico City, Mexico

Security guards of the CETRAM Indios Verdes bus station spot a guy doing some shady business on the "K" platform. 20 eggs and 6 shells have been seized.

Sin Embargo, August 13, 2020.8

August 19, 2020 Mazatlán, State of Sinaloa, Mexico

Aurelio "N" was walking along the street with a heavy backpack and a plastic bag in his hand, inside which the sleuths of the municipal police thought they could distinguish turtle eggs. 173 loggerhead turtle eggs seized.

Debate, August 19, 2020.9

End of August 2020

Lázaro Cárdenas, State of Michoacán, Mexico

Alerted by the C5i (Centro Estatal de Comando de Comunicaciones, Cómputo, Control, Coordinación e Inteligencia), the municipal police deployed to Boulevard Playero near Eréndira beach and intercepted a man on a motorbike. Seizure of 96 eggs. Indictment of Valentín L. Altorre, August 28, 2020.¹⁰

September 9, 2020

San Pedro Huamelula, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

A motorbike was found abandoned on the beach of Morro Ayuta, a nesting site, by Profepa agents on patrol. Its driver had also left 18,000 Ridley sea turtle eggs. The eggs and the motorbike were handed over to the Attorney General's office in Salina Cruz. Profepa, September 11, 2020.¹¹

September 28, 2020

Tecoman, State of Colima, Mexico



A man who was in possession of 61 Ridley sea turtle eggs has been sentenced to compensatory measures: picking up litter to improve turtle nesting sites.

Profepa, September 28, 2020 ; El Heraldo de Mexico, September 29, 2020.¹²

PANAMA

Early August 2020

Province of Bocas del Toro, Panama House arrest of 2 individuals aged

House arrest of 2 individuals aged 29 and 63 years. During the course of the investigation, they are not allowed to

leave the Changuinola district. They are suspected of having sold approximately 200 turtle eggs and meat.

Crítica, August 1st, 2020.¹³

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

August 9, 2020 Lingshui Li Autonomous County, Hainan Province, China

Release of 99 sea turtles. 70 were reportedly seized in 2019 in the province and 29 others in Jiangsu province. 200 are still in shelters.

The South China Morning Post, August 12, 2020.14



INDONESIA

July 1st, 2020

Port of Dwikora, Pontianak, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia



He had transported 9,310 eggs in cardboard boxes on the ferry from Bintan Island. The trafficker was busted on arrival.

Traffic, July 3, 2020 ; Antara News, July 1st, 2020.15

July 11, 2020

Denpasar, Bali Province, Bali Island, Indonesia

The 36 green turtles were rescued from trafficking thanks to a search of the ferry. They were reportedly caught in Grajagan (Banyuwangi regency, East Java province), located some 100 km away, at nesting sites. The shells are between 42 and 101 cm long. The entire crew is involved, the commander first of all. The person behind this is said to be a certain Muhayat. A turtle is worth between 2 and 5 million rupees (140 to 350 US\$). Those in good health, should be quickly released.

Sindo News, July 12, 2020 ; Berita Musi, July 15, 2020.¹⁶

July 2020

June-July 2020 State of Sabah, Malaysia

Alsirad Samad, 21, was sentenced to one year in prison for attempting to sell 20 green turtle eggs via Facebook at the end of June 2020. He was arrested in the car park of a hypermarket when he was delivering the eggs.

MALAYSIA



As in Peninsular Malaysia, there has been an upsurge in offers for sale on Internet since the beginning of the year and the Covid-19 crisis in Insular Malaysia. Eggs are sold for around 1.20 US\$ per unit. The report from WWF Malaysia and the Sabah administration says that 238,396 eggs were seized between 1999 and 2017. Interpol says that seizures of wild animals and wildlife products account for 10-15% of overall smuggling. If this is the case, at least 1.6 million eggs have been illegally sold and consumed over 18 years in the State of Sabah alone.

The Star, July 4, 2020 ; Traffic, July 13, 2020.17

July 4, 2020

Sandakan, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Seizure of 4,000 eggs in 2 boats originating from the Philippines. In the wee hours, the smugglers fled into the marshes. The Star, July 4, 2020.¹⁸

July 17, 2020

State of Sabah, Malaysia

Mrs Rusmah Madun, 52 years old, a former civil servant honoured for the quality of her services, was fined 12,000



ringgits or 2,800 US\$ for refusing on November 5, 2019, to hand over to the authorities 29 green turtle eggs that she was trying to sell at the entrance of a restaurant.

Daily Express, July 18, 2020.¹⁹

August 18, 2020 Sandakan, State of Sabah, Malaysia

New seizure on board a craft registered in the Philippines. 1,500 eggs in 3 big bags. The crew fled into the marshes.

Daily Express, August 19, 2020.²⁰

September 2, 2020 Kota Kinabalu, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Arman Amri, a 52-year-old immigrant accused of transporting 57 green turtle eggs, released on bail at the beginning of March (see "On the Trail" n°28 p. 26), is nowhere to be found. Judge Elsie Primus keeps extending the arrest warrant against him: on September 2, October 8, November 9, December 8. Daily Express, September 3, October 10 and November 13, 2020.²¹

SOUTHERN ASIA

SRI LANKA

REPEATED OFFENSE September 28, 2020 Jaffna, Northern Province, Sri Lanka

Arrest of a fisherman in possession of 5 turtles. The man was previously engaged in the sale of turtle meat. The case is in the hands of the Ministry of Fisheries.

Sunday Times (Sri Lanka), September 29, 2020.22



SOUTHERN EUROPE

ITALY

FAMILY AFFAIRS Around September 22, 2020 Mezzojuso, Metropolitan City of Palermo, Sicily Region, Italy

A search of the home of an 87-year-old woman, living with her husband and her brother, led to the seizure of a .22 caliber EIG Derringer pistol, a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson revolver (under a pillow), 4.5 kg of black powder, a cannonball, 4 knives, 1,000 rounds of ammunition and cartridge cases, component parts of firearms and equipment for reloading and storing ammunition. In the middle of this arsenal, the carabinieri found a loggerhead turtle shell. The trio is charged with illegal possession of weapons and parts of protected species. The wife and her brother are also charged with abuse of vulnerable persons, in this case the bedridden husband. ANSA, 22 septembre 2020 ; ViviCentro, 23 septembre 2020.²³

MANATEES, DOLPHINS, PORPOISES, SPERM WHALES, WHALES, WALRUSES ...

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Extinction option for northern right whales July 9, 2020

United States of America

The NGO PEER (Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility) points to NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and accuses it of not implementing the 3 measures it believes could save northern right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*, Appendix I).

- Strict control of fishing gear in migration corridors to avoid entanglement.

- Ban on deafening seismic researches for fossil resources in migration corridors to avoid disorientation and mutilation of eardrums.

- Reduction of the speed of ships as soon as a whale is reported in their trajectory to prevent him from impaling himself on the bulbous bows. Calves are not spared from these fatal collisions.

These measures would be salutary provided that they were applied jointly by the United States and Canada. ...

... PEER, reinforced by the Center for Biological Diversity and Forward Democracy, says that NOAA directors appointed by the former Trump administration are not listening to the recommendations of their scientific basis and are leaving the field free to the fishing industry, oil companies and maritime traffic.

"Extinction is entirely preventable" say NOAA biologists and members of the NGO PEER as public servants. Swift action must be taken, the North Atlantic right whale are in ultra-minority, 400 at most, of whom only 250 are of reproductive age. EcoWatch, July 11, 2020; PEER, July 9, 2020.¹

July 31, 2020

Gandy Beach, State of Florida, United States of America

Yunior Rosales Morales and Yandie Concepcion were arrested. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission agents caught them in the middle of the night, while they had captured a bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*, Appendix II) and fish with 3 gillnets measuring 288 m².

ABC Action News, August 5, 2020.²

August 2020

Bristol Bay, State of Alaska, United States of America

More than 12 walruses (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) have died in Bristol Bay. The puncture wounds on the bodies are consistent with bullet wounds. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is offering a 10,000 US\$ reward for any useful information.

The Bristol Bay Times, August 13, 2020.³

August 27, 2020 – May 14, 2021 Stonington, State of Connecticut, United States of America

Mystic Aquarium, whose motto is to "inspire people to care for and protect our ocean planet through conservation, education, and research", has been requesting permission since March 2019 to import 5 belugas (Delphinapterus leucas, Appendix II) aged 7 to 12 years and born in captivity from Marineland in Niagara Falls (Ontario province, Canada), where 50 belugas live. Mystic Aquarium already keeps 3 individuals and says it wants to carry out non-invasive scientific research with these new specimens. They will be trained to accept blood, saliva and blowhole air samples in exchange for rewards. NOAA has given the green light. However, the authorisation comes with the prohibition of breeding them, bringing them into contact with the public, and training them for entertainment purposes.

Seven of the eight proposed research subjects were authorised: neuroimmunological response to environmental and anthropogenic stressors, development of novel non-invasive techniques to assess health in free-ranging whales, hearing and physiological response to anthropogenic sound, photogrammetry body condition studies, diving physiology, microbiome, and testing of prototype telemetry and imaging devices before deployment on wild beluga whales. The only one that has not been permitted is the study of reproduction.

The group Friends of Animals filed a lawsuit on September 3. It claims that the well-being of the belugas is threatened by their transfer and separation from their fellows. On December 23, 2020, Mystic Aquarium agrees not to import the belugas before March 31, 2021, in order to allow time for a judge to review the complaint, which has been dismissed. The Canadian authorities gave their approval in April.

After a trip by plane and then by tractor-trailer, the first 3 belugas arrived on May 14. The last 2 are awaited for the following day.

NOAA Fisheries, August 27, 2020 ; Hakai Magazine, September 21, 2020 ; AP News, January 4, 2020, and May 15, 2021.⁴



VENEZUELA

July 2020

Muñoz, State of Apure, Venezuela

Arrest of José Luis Monasterio Venta. He is accused of poaching an Amazonian manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*, Appendix I) on July 15 in the Apure River, a tributary of the Orinoco River. The corpse was used as a merry-go-round. Children were perched on his back to go for a round on a dead manatee back. The sirenian was intended for food consumption. Ululeo, July 2020; Notiespatano/ElNacional, July 21, 2020.⁵

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

Early July 2020 Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China Dismantling of a sperm whale gang

The beans began to be spilled when Chengdu postal customs intercepted a parcel from abroad containing 2.7 kg of sperm whale (Physeter macrocephalus, Appendix I) teeth. When everything was brought to light, the overall balance reached 1,038 kg in 3 years of trafficking, i.e., on the basis of 20 to 25 teeth per lower jaw, between 125 and 155 sperm whales. This is a theoretical calculation because the smuggled ivory includes a few snuffboxes, chess pieces, and statuettes of polar animals, cups, dice. The teeth were fresh or old, raw or carved, sold under the folkloric and universal name of scrimshaws. They came from the looting of sperm whale carcasses stranded on the world's coasts or from purchases in antique shops or auction houses. The Chinese gang mainly received parcels from Russia, Japan and Canada, some in airplane carry-on bag. Sperm whale ivory was purchased via the Internet at around 56.5 US\$/kg and resold at 3 times that price to Chinese buyers. International trade in all sperm whale parts is banned by CITES. See "On the Trail"n°2 p.5 and 77, n°3 p.76, n°7 p.7, n°10 p.9, n°11 p.97 and 98, n°12 p.12, n°13 p.114, n°15 p.11, n°16 p.12, n°17 p.16 and 117, n°18 p.13, n°20 p.128, n°21 p.14, n°24 p.17, n°25 p.20 and n°26 p.18.

. Sohu, May 18, 2020 ; Yunnan, July 31, 2020.

Week of July 6, 2020 Tian'ezhou National Nature Reserve, Hubei Province, China

A 4-year-old female finless black porpoise (*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*, Appendix I) has just been released. She is the first individual born in captivity to experience freedom. Bei Bei underwent 2 months of training. Her net cage was opened on a 20,000 m² water area. While she loved frozen fish, she had to learn to appreciate fresh fish and



catch them herself. According to Hao Yujiang of the Institute of Hydrobiology under Chinese Academy of Sciences, "weighing about 60 kilograms, Bei Bei is going to be mature sexually. To release her to the wild now is very important because it will help her to mate successfully". On July 13, employees of the institute said they spotted Bei Bei, or a very similar individual, a kilometre away from her net cage.

There were only 1,012 finless black porpoises left in 2018, including 80 in the Tian'ezhou nature reserve. They live only in the Yangtze River and in the Dongting and Poyang lakes. Their population has collapsed over the past 40 years as a result of the destruction of their habitat. China Daily, July 16, 2020.⁷

August 10 and 13 and December 22, 2020

Dalian, Liaoning Province, China



This is the trial of the 16 people allegedly responsible for poaching 200 juvenile

spotted seals (*Phoca largha*) in Liaodong Bay and selling them to aquatic parks and private individuals in Henan, Yunnan and Zhejiang provinces (see "On the Trail" n°24 p.17).

The organiser of the network who acted as a link between the poachers and the buyers was sentenced to 14 years in prison and fined 5 million yuan (713,947 US\$). The fishermen who caught the seal pups on the sea ice received sentences ranging from 10 months to 12 years in prison and 7 aquatic parks were fined between 150,000 and 3 million yuan.

After the kidnapping, the seals were transported to the attics of a poultry farm in the mountains of the peninsula. The survivors were sold for between 1,000 and 10,000 yuan, or 145 and 1,450 US\$. When the police forces raided the farm, they found 39 frozen bodies in a pit and 80 seals in a poor state of health, some of them about to die. Seventy-one were placed in specialised institutions where they were fed twice a day with milk and pieces of mackerel. Two to 3 months later, 61 specimens were returned to the sea after tests of mobility and food autonomy.

... The liability of the managers of the Liaodong Bay peninsula nature reserve for spotted seals was also incurred. They are accused of having lacked vigilance and coherence in the exercise of their tasks. The Central Environmental Inspectorate pointed out that the reserve was under the supervision of the agriculture, forestry, environment and tourism departments, that each of the administrations worked in silo and that under these conditions the enforcement of the law and the survival of the species were not guaranteed.

The Paper, August 13, 2020; TBN, August 14, 2020; People's Daily, Demcember 22, 2020.⁸

SOUTHERN ASIA

BANGLADESH

July 9, 2020 Lemubari, Manikganj District, Dhaka **Division**, Bangladesh A 2.4m long young Ganges river dolphin gangetica, (Platanista Appendix I) was caught, butchered and sold. A student, Shakib Ahmed, denounced this act on social networks. He is supported by a part of the population. The Daily Star, July 10, 2020.⁹



INDIA

August 21, 2020

Bongaigaon, Bongaigaon District, State of Assam, India

The individual had posted a video of the poaching of a Ganges river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*, Appendix I) on social networks. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) tracked him on the web. Dolphin meat were seized at his home. He was arrested.

WCCB, August 27, 2020.10

WESTERN ASIA

SYRIA

End of July 2020 Tartus, Tartus Governorate, Syria



Satellite images show marine mammal pens in the Russian enclave of Tartus port between September and December 2018. According to naval expert H.I. Sutton, speaking on the Naval News website, the pens, given their small size, would accomodate pinnipeds rather than dolphins. The marine mammals are believed to be used to protect the Russian fleet from mines. Sea lions have been used by the US Navy to detect mines in military ports or in bays that have been the scene of historical conflicts.

H.I. Sutton, June 24, 2020; Naval News, July 10, 2020.¹¹

NORTHERN EUROPE

DENMARK

July 15, 2020 Hvalba, Faroe Islands, Denmark



252 long-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala melas*, Appendix II) and 35 Atlantic white-sided dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*, Appendix II) killed with knives during the first Grindadráp of the year, authorised despite the Covid-19 pandemic. The meat cutters flocked to the shore. The government had asked them not to crowd around. See "On the Trail" n°21 p.15, n°26 p.18 for the years 2018 and 2019.

Info, July 16, 2020 ; Jn.fo, July 16, 2020 ; VP.fo, July 15, 2020.¹²

July 2020 - March 2021 Iceland

The whaling company Hvalur is in turmoil. Three of its shareholders, Einar Sveinsson, Benedikt Einarsson and



Ingimundur Sveinsson, who hold just over 5.3% of the company's shares, were demanding to redeem their shares for the equivalent of 11.2 million US\$. They accused Kristján Loftsson, the CEO, of buying shares at a discounted price and of having disproportionate interests compared to other shareholders. Loftsson believed that, if the court ruled in their favour, this could cause the dissolution of Hvalur by encouraging other shareholders to carry out the same procedure. In March 2021, the court found that the legal procedures had not been followed by Hvalur and ordered Hvalur to pay the legal costs of the 3 aggrieved shareholders, equivalent to 72,000 US\$.

Hvalur has not hunted whales since 2018, the year in which it obtained a permit to hunt 161 Norh Atlantic fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*, Appendix I with reservations from Iceland and Japan). The company is experiencing difficulties since the Japanese hunt Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*, Appendix I with reservations from Iceland and Japan) in their territorial waters and no longer need to buy meat from the company.

See "On the Trail" n°13 p.4, n°5 p.10, n°21 p.16 and n°29 p.181.

Iceland Review, July 8, 2020.13

Early August 2020

Heimaey Island, Sudurland Region, Iceland

Transfer of two 12-year-old female belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*, Appendix II) from Changfeng Ocean World (Shanghai) to Klettsvik Bay, in southern Iceland. The 9,656-km journey was made by truck, plane, truck again and tugboat. Little Grey and Little White were purchased in 2011 from a Russian research centre. They will now live in a 32,000 m² pool in the bay. A similar transfer took place between June 19 and July 9, 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°25 p.20).

Daily Mail, August 10, 2020.¹⁴

WESTERN EUROPE

FRANCE

April 1st-September 20, 2020 Norway

Norway had authorised the hunting of 1,300 minke whales (Balaenoptera acutorostrata, Appendix I with a Norwegian reservation) for the season (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.181). In the end, 503 individuals were caught, making 2020 the deadliest year since 2016 (600 minke whales killed). According to the whaling the Covid-19 business, given pandemic has



Norwegians back the taste for whale meat. The desire to consume local products has allegedly led to an increase in sales. Norsk Hval, a company that sells whale meat, is delighted to see this return to the old days: "We have never experienced as much interest as this year. The producers have not been able to get enough meat into the shops."

This view is not shared by animal and environmental protection NGOs, which recall that in 2019 two thirds of Norwegians said they no longer eat or have never eaten whale meat. According to the Swiss-based NGO OceanCare, "the current increase in numbers shows how desperately Norway is clinging to its whaling activities. It's just cynical to classify the whaling industry, which is artificially kept alive through subsidies, to be of systemic importance during the COVID19 crisis". Twelve boats participated in the fishery, compared to 10 in 2019. The government also subsidises the conception of food supplements or cosmetic products based on whale oil.

Mongabay, August 27, 2020 ; Animal Welfare Institute, February 23, 2021.¹⁵



September 16, 2020 Thézan-lès-Béziers, Department of Hérault, France



The body of an 80 cm long striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*, Appendix II) was lying in the coastal river Orb. Striped dolphins generally live more than 200 m from the coast. According to the French Biodiversity, "he could not have got to this place on his own". Post-mortem examinations are underway. France Bleu Hérault, September 18, 2020.¹⁶



AUSTRALIA

September 15, 2020 Ballina Beach, State of New South Wales, Australia

Stranding of a sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I), 16.9 m long and 54 t. When the authorities went to assess the possibilities of evacuation on September 15, his lower jaw was missing. The 30 or so conical ivory teeth are likely to be sold on the black market. The largest ones weigh one kg. One kg of sperm whale ivory can be sold for between 2,000 and 5,000 \in (2,380-5,960 US\$). See above page 197.

ABC News, September 15, 2020.¹⁷

