

ROBIN DES BOIS

# ON<sub>the</sub> TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin  
Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling  
n°23. Events from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to the 31 of January 2019  
Published on August 5, 2019

Original version in French





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

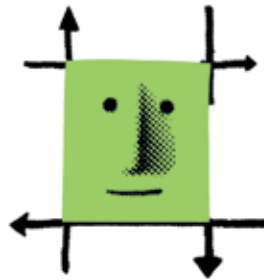
“On the Trail” highlights the new weapons of plunderers, the new modus operandi of smugglers, rumours intended to attract humans consumers of animals and their by-products. “On the Trail” gathers and disseminates feedback from institutions, individuals and NGOs that fight against poaching and smuggling.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

**Previous issues in English**

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

**Previous issues in French**

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



ROBIN DES BOIS

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The English version of this n°23 of “A la Trace”/“On the Trail” was supported by the Séché Environnement group.



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## **Judgment and sanction**

Condemnation, acquittal, fine...



## **Human death**

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



## **Poisoning**

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



## **Trapping**

Poaching by jaw trap, snare ...



## **Full moon**

Moonlight poaching

## **CITES Appendices**

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

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

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

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



When Franz Weber died on April 2, 2019 in Bern near the banks of the Aare, Brigitte Bardot expressed her emotion and gratitude to the «man of her first battle», that of the Canadian ice floe that turned red by the blood of the lynched seals. Franz Weber was also the spokesman for white, green, blue or carefully cultivated landscapes. It is probably no coincidence that since the beginning in 2013, "On the Trail" has benefited from the precious and indispensable help of the Franz Weber Foundation and the Brigitte Bardot Foundation. Robin des Bois addresses all his friendship to his wife Judith Weber as well as to Vera Weber who with all her team will carry the light born of her father. Her victory in the long-term campaign against the outrageous Basel oceanarium project is a new sparkle.

## On the Front Lines

### AFRICA

#### BURKINA FASO

**January 12, 2019**  
**National Park W, Tapoa Province, Eastern Region, Burkina Faso**

During a patrol, a water and forest officer and a tracker were killed and seriously injured. The forests of eastern Burkina Faso are overwhelmed with insecurity. Rebels are seeking refuge and poaching there.<sup>1</sup>



#### MOZAMBIQUE

**November 2018**  
**Sabie Game Park, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

An ANAC (Administração Nacional das Áreas de Conservação) ranger on patrol was ambushed. He is in critical condition.<sup>2</sup>

#### UGANDA

**November 15, 2018**  
**Mount Elgon National Park, Eastern Region, Uganda. Border with Kenya.**

Corporal Patrick Udule dies violently following a riot in a village community. The reasons for his murder are not clear. He was a member of the UWA (Uganda Wildlife Authority) rangers in Mount Elgon Park, which extends over 4,000 km<sup>2</sup> and reaches an altitude of 4,321m. It is home to 300 species of birds and 4 tribes, the Benet, the Bagisu and the Sabinu, as well as the Ndorobos in the heart of the Benet forest.<sup>3</sup>



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#### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

**Early January 2019**  
**Chinko Nature Reserve, Mbomou and Haute-Kotto prefectures, Central African Republic**

Deadly encounter at the confluence of the Vovodo and Chink rivers between 6 heavily armed poachers and guards. A poacher was killed. African Parks and Elephant Crisis Fund are in charge of the safety in the reserve.<sup>4</sup>



#### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**November 28, 2018**  
**Virunga National Park, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**



Since 2012, his job had been to protect the gorillas. He was fatally wounded by rebels near Lake Edward. Two civilians also lost their lives in the ambush. Their identity is not known. In the past 20 years, Kasereka Masumbuko Ezechiel is the 175<sup>th</sup> park ranger to die on the job. He is survived by his wife, Justine, and their 7 children.<sup>5</sup>

## TANZANIA

### October 9, 2018 Near Ruaha National Park, Tanzania

A ranger and a scout were murdered, shot with arrows and spears by farmers who wanted to get their cattle back. The cattle had been confiscated because they were found grazing illegally in the park.<sup>6</sup>



### October 29, 2018 Ikorongo, Tarime and Serengeti Districts, North of Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

Charles Ndakama and John Magwe, 39 and 41 years old, were drowned. For 24 hours, the 2 rangers had been pursuing so-called herdsman armed with rifles, according to the eye witness accounts of several villagers. The circumstances of the drama are unknown.

In the past 6 months, incursions in Tanzanian national parks have multiplied under the guise of cattle grazing. The hidden poachers are often accompanied by minors. 50 suspects have been arrested, including 21 children.<sup>7</sup>



## ASIA

## INDIA

### Night from October 16 to 17, 2018 Sukhanpurva, Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh State, India

Sukhpal Singh (48 years old) was murdered with a sharp object, possibly an axe. His body was found near the village. This skilled forest ranger from the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve had led to the arrest of many poachers and his testimony was instrumental in the conviction of tiger poachers in 2013. He had recently been congratulated by the State Forest Minister. His killer is probably an accomplice of one of the convicts, or a member of the timber mafia who looted the reserve. Compensation of one million (13,775US\$) and 500,000 rupees (6,887US\$) will be awarded to his family by the State and the National Tiger Conservation Agency. For its part, the Indian WWF announced that it would pay 300,000 rupees (4132 US\$).<sup>8</sup>



### January 27, 2019 Valmiki National Park, East Champan district, State of Bihar, India. Border along Nepal.

Death of 2 guards during clashes with poachers. While patrolling in the Naurangia Forest, 7 guards spotted a group of poachers setting traps and tried to stop them. Given that there were around 20 poachers, they took over the guards and attacked them with iron bars, axes, and other sharp objects.

Arjun Yadav and Hiralal Kushwaha died on the spot, because of head and neck injuries. A third guard, Pradeep Mahto, was seriously injured and cleared out to the nearest hospital.<sup>9</sup>



## Seahorses

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

ASIA

### CHINA

**November 23, 2018**

**Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao border crossing, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau**

Seizure of 16 dried seahorses.<sup>1</sup>

**End of December 2018**

**Dongxing, Guangxi autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam**

Seizure of 37.06 kg of seahorses (22,082 specimens) wrapped in plastic, on board a fishing boat that came from the mouth of the Beilun River which separates Viet Nam from China.<sup>2</sup>



### VIET NAM

**December 19, 2018**

**Tan Cang- Cai Mep Port Terminal, Phu My District, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of nearly 500 kg of dried seahorses hidden among sheep skins in a container imported by Phuc Think Trading Import Export Company Limited. Customs officers also found 4.5 kg of genitalia of a to-be-determined species in the shipment.<sup>3</sup>

EUROPE

### PORTUGAL

**January 24, 2019**

**Ria Formosa Natural Park, Faro district, Portugal**

Seizure of seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) and octopuses (ordre Octopoda) in 51 traps only authorized for the capture of eels. They were released.<sup>4</sup>

## Corals

ASIA

### CHINA

**October 12, 2018**

**Gongbei Port of Entry, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

Seizure of 1.4 kg of white coral of the genus *Scleractinia*.<sup>1</sup>

**October 15, 2018**

**Xiamen Airport, Fujian Province, China**

Seizure of 9 kg of black coral branches (*Myriopathes japonica*, Appendix II) from the luggage of a passenger coming from Hong Kong on a Cathay Dragon flight.<sup>2</sup>

**November 2018**

**Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure by postal customs of 4 parcels containing 276 g of red coral and 132 g of black coral necklaces shipped from abroad to the address of a single recipient.<sup>3</sup>

EUROPE

### ITALY

**October 2018**

**Palermo Airport, Sicily Region, Italy**

Seizure of 5 corals from the luggage of a passenger from Mexico.<sup>4</sup>



**November 2018**

**Valleggia, Liguria region, Italy**

Following the seizure in March 2018 of 8 tons of coral belonging to 7 protected species in the port of Genoa (see "On the Trail" n°20 p. 5), an investigation was launched and reached the conclusion that a CITES official from the sending country, the Solomon Islands, made a mistake in the taxonomy of corals. The regularization has been obtained by the lawyer of the importer, Latiaxis, who presents himself as a historical supplier of fossil shells and corals in Europe and an expert in prestigious auction houses. The seizure of the suspect cargo has been lifted.<sup>5</sup>

# Abalones

*Haliotis* spp.

AFRICA

## SOUTH AFRICA

**October 3, 2018**  
**Groblersburg Port of Entry, Limpopo Province. Border with Botswana.**

Seizure of 1,350 kg of abalone with a commercial value of 425,300 US\$ (315 US\$/kg) hidden in potato bags in a compartment under the trailer. Ongoing investigation into this international network.<sup>1</sup>



**October 9, 2018**  
**Near Bloemfontein, Free State Province, South Africa**

A minibus registered in the Western Cape Province was followed on the N1. Police patrol intervened and immobilized the suspect vehicle at a service station. Flight and arrest of 2 passengers. Discovery in the minibus of 87 bags filled with abalone. Commercial value: 1.2 million rand or 85,000 US\$.<sup>2</sup>

**October 12, 2018**  
**Cape Town, Province of Western Cape, South Africa**

Police who were alerted by the victims of a hold-up inside a private home found a shucking, drying and packaging workshop for abalones and stocks estimated worth 10 million rand (710,000 US\$). The 2 victims, a couple in their thirties whose nationality has not been specified, are indicted for trafficking. The hold-up by 7 masked men looks like fighting within the abalone mafia.<sup>3</sup>

**October 30, 2018**  
**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**  
Complaints of bad odours. Search warrant at 9:30 p.m. Seizure of 4,200 shucked abalones and 16,105 dried abalones with a commercial value of 8 million rand or 567,000 US\$, of pots, gas bottles, fans, freezers and salt bags, as well as an electronic scale and incense sticks to mask smells. Two arrests, 21 and 37 years old.<sup>4</sup>



**November 14, 2018**  
**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**  
Seizure of 1,561 dried abalones and 2,510 shucked abalones, stored in 10 freezers located in the bedrooms and garage of a private home. Commercial value : 2 million rand (137,000 US\$). Search carried out by 30 police officers. Arrest of a man of foreign nationality, aged 28.<sup>5</sup>

**November 21, 2018**  
**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**  
Seizure of 368 dried abalone from 2 adjacent houses, estimated value of 184,000 rand or 12,600 US\$. One arrest.<sup>6</sup>



**December 10, 2018**  
**Near Springbok, Northern Cape Province, South Africa**

Interception of a convoy (a truck and an escort car) and seizure of 341 kg (144,474 specimens) hidden under meat packages. Local value of the cargo estimated at 54,800 US\$. The convoy was heading for Springbok, near the border with Namibia.<sup>7</sup>

**December 11, 2018**  
**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

There's something wrong in St. James. Poachers tried to ram the police boat that was going to put 400 lobsters back into the sea. In return, the police seized 400 abalones poached at night by 5 divers who managed to escape.<sup>8</sup>

**Mid-December 2018**  
**Swellendam, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

8,000 abalones in a broken down car. Interrogation of a man hiding in the bushes.<sup>9</sup>

**Mid-December 2018**  
**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Indictment of Anthony Broadway, usual lawyer for fishermen and poachers. He is suspected of having participated in the laundering of abalone looting money by setting up 2 "charitable" funds, 'the Immigrants Trust' and 'the Fishermans Assistance Trust'.



His 2 accomplices, Michael Norman and David Bannister, were sentenced to 18 and 14 years of suspended jail, with a five-year probation period.<sup>10</sup>

**January 18, 2019**  
**Milnerton, Western Cape, South Africa**

Dismantling of a sweatshop. Seizure of 932 shucked abalones and 633 dried abalones with an estimated value of 167,000 US\$. In the Chevrolet of the 2 Chinese citizens who were arrested, the police also seized 50 kg of salt.<sup>11</sup>

## Clams, Conches and Date Mussels

### ASIA

#### CHINA

**January 29, 2019**  
**Kunming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China**

A 2 kg clam (Tridacnidae family, Appendix II) was seized from the belongings of a passenger disembarking from Sihanoukville, Cambodia.<sup>1</sup>

### EUROPE

#### ITALY

**October 10, 24 and November 9, 2018**  
**Nardò, Brindisi and Sant'Isodoro, Apulia Region, Italy**

- The arsenal of a date mussel (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) looter was discovered : scuba tanks, hammer, net. Intervention by the nautical police, seizure of 5 kg. An interrogation.

- Seizure of 2.5 kg of dates on the Amerigo Vespucci waterfront in Brindisi.

- Seizure of 4 kg of dates in a bucket in the heart of the Porto Cesareo marine protected area.<sup>2</sup>



#### REPEATED OFFENSE

**Early December 2018**

**Castellamare di Stabia, Campania Region, Italy**  
He is locally called "the Arsène Lupin of date mussel". If at first light you see a Fiat Punto passing through the deserted streets of Castellamare di Stabia, there is a good chance that it is G.V., the famous Datteraro who returns from the Sorrento peninsula where during the night he cracks rocks with a hammer to catch the precious bivalve shellfish and sell them to restaurants and street vendors. This time, G. V. was caught in the net of the Carabinieri and was unable to deliver to his customers the 20 kg of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) for which he had received an order for the feasts of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>3</sup>

Dates mussels, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 9, n°21 p. 6-7.



**December 20, 2018**

**Castellammare di Stabia, Campania Region, Italy**

Nighttime seizure by the Coast Guard of 50 kg of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II). Interrogation of 3 poachers. Seizure of a boat, a car and unloading equipment. At the home of one of the looters, more date mussels were discovered along with a small amount of marijuana.<sup>4</sup>

## NETHERLANDS

**October 2018**

**Netherlands**

Seizure of 6.2 kg of queen conch (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II) in the trolley of a passenger coming from the Netherlands Antilles.<sup>5</sup>



## Sea Urchins

### AMERICA

**FRANCE (MARTINIQUE)**

**October 15, 2018**

**Martinique Region, France**

At the opening of the regulated sea urchin fishing season (October 15 to 30 between 7a.m. and noon), 5 poachers were caught in the act, leaving on site 270 kg of sea urchins that were returned to the water by the Maritime Gendarmerie. As always, professional fishers say that the resource is abundant. The local press incites the sea urchin poachers, speaking of it as "Caribbean caviar". Regular checks will be carried out by the gendarmerie during and after the regulated season.<sup>1</sup>

### EUROPE

**ITALY**

**Early December 2018**

**Marine Protected Area Capo Caccia-Isola Piana, Sardinia Region, Italy**

Seizure of a thousand sea urchins (Echinoidea class), the "bogamari" which have established the reputation of Alghero's restaurants. Their consumption is prohibited. Still alive, they were returned to the sea. The scuba divers fled.<sup>2</sup>

## Sea Cucumbers

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

### AMERICA

**MEXICO**

**Mid-October 2018**

**Dzilam de Bravo, Yucatán State, Mexico**

Seizure of 35 kg of sea cucumbers, a digital scale, pots and pans and dismantling of a clandestine kitchen.<sup>1</sup>

**Early December 2018**

**Halachó, Yucatán State, Mexico**

Seizure of 5 garbage bags from a bus in Merida containing 60 kg of sea cucumbers. Arrest of a passenger.<sup>2</sup>

### ASIA

**CHINA**

**Early December 2018**

**Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Highway Port, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

Seizure of 24 bags of sea cucumbers, 12 kg in total. No entry into the territory for health reasons. Bacteriological risks. Origin unknown.<sup>3</sup>



**January 18, 2019**

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

Seizure of 4 t of dried sea cucumbers for an estimated value of approximately 750,000 US\$ (188 US\$/kg).<sup>4</sup>

## INDIA

### REPEATED OFFENSE

**October 9, 2018**

**Kilakarai, Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Forest rangers raid a house in a residential area following a tip-off. Three men are in the middle of a sea cucumber scramble. Seizure of 100 kg for export. One of the traffickers, Akbar Ali, has already been arrested twice for transporting and selling sea cucumbers which he obtains from local fishermen. The seizure was destroyed with the agreement of the judicial authorities.<sup>5</sup>

### GANG

**December 5, 2018**

**Keela Arasaradi, Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Officers from the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park made their largest annual seizure of sea cucumbers, also known as holothurians or bêche-de-mer: 1,500 kg of *Holothuria scabra*, cooking and drying equipment in a warehouse. On the spot Maideen (21 years old), Mohideen (23 years old) and Arunchalam (69 years old) were arrested. They face up to 7 years in prison. Sea cucumbers were to be smuggled to Sri Lanka and then China. Their value on the international market would be 8,000 rupees/kg (114 US\$).<sup>6</sup>

## SRI LANKA

**November 11, 2018**

**Silavathurai, Mannar District, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of 2,579 specimens, 6 boats, diving equipment. 16 arrests. On the same day, a "fisherman" was intercepted by Navy commandos and a boat was seized. He was cutting down mangrove trees.<sup>7</sup>

**November 27, 2018**

**Mannar, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of a wallam (boat) and 352 sea cucumbers. Three arrests. In the dunes, Navy commandos also seized 85 kg of kendu leaves imported from Tamil Nadu. They are used as paper for beedies cigars.<sup>8</sup>

**January 14, 2019**

**Mannar, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of 302 kg of sea cucumbers from a boat on the bay's beaches.<sup>9</sup>



## EUROPE

### ITALY

**November 2018**

**San Vito dei Normanni, Apulia Region, Italy**

Seizure by the Taranto Coast Guard of 250 kg of sea cucumbers aboard the boat of a freediving scuba diver. Their capture is prohibited by ministerial order of February 27, 2018. Commercial value: 5,000 €.<sup>10</sup>

**January 10, 2019**

**Lecce, Apuglia Region, Italy**

Unless further postponed, the trial of 7 fishermen from Gallipoli and Nardò and one fisherman from Gallipoli will begin. The investigation started on 15 December 2015. A trailer truck loaded with seafood products had been inspected on the Gallipoli - Lecce road. The cargo inspection resulted in the seizure of 11 tons of sea cucumbers without a delivery slip, without making reference to their origin. It was found that several fishing cooperatives in the Apulia region and those in Brindisi and Taranto were involved in the trafficking. Marketing of at least 200 tons has been established. From Puglia by car ferry, successive deliveries of sea cucumbers reached Greece by road and Asia by unknown means.<sup>11</sup>



# Fishes

## AFRICA

### CAPE VERDE

January 15, 2019

**Praia, Island of Santiago, Cape Verde**

Seizure of 2 adult bluntnose sixgill sharks (*Hexanchus griseus*) caught by a pirate ship. All of the fins have been cut off and they have not been found. They're somewhere in the port at a middleman's house. The Movement against Pollution in Cape Verde (MCPCV) warned about the consumption of meat from these sharks that have accumulated heavy metals and other toxic substances. The government of the archipelago reminded everyone that finning is prohibited. Police have identified the owner of the boat. An arrest warrant is reportedly imminent.<sup>1</sup>



### TANZANIA

January 15, 2019

**Mtwara, Mtwara region, Tanzania**

Han Ming Chuan, Taiwanese captain of the *Buah Naga No 1*, the Malaysian ship-owner and the consignee, sentenced to 20 years in prison or a joint fine of one billion shillings (435,000 US\$) for ordering or contributing to the finning (90 kg). The 3 were remanded in custody pending the payment of the fine. See "On the Trail" n°20 p.14<sup>2</sup>



## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

October 25, 2018

**Manaus, Manacapuru and Iranduba, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

IBAMA tracks the use of baits from Amazonian dolphins (*Inia geoffrensis*, Appendix II), black caimans (*Melanosuchus niger*, Appendix II), and eyeglass caimans (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II) in the Amazon basin that are considered very favorable for fishing for catfish (*Calophysus macropterus*).

As part of this screening campaign, it seized 166 tons of fish from clandestine cold rooms. The species identified are the laulao catfish (*Brachyplatystoma vaillantii*), the highwaterman catfish (*Hypophthalmus edentatus*), the silver arowana (*Osteoglossum bicirrhosum*), the lince catfish (*Platynematichthys notatus*) and the butterfly peacock bass (*Cichla ocellaris*). The fish, if not tainted, will be distributed to charitable organizations.<sup>3</sup>



Mid-November 2018

**Rio de Janeiro, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Seizure of 50 ornamental fish: jewelled blennies (*Salarias fasciatus*) and false leopards (*Macropharyngodon ornatus*). The "goods" come from Indonesia. After quarantine they could be given to AquaRio.<sup>4</sup>



December 17, 2018

**Juruti, State of Pará, Brazil**

Seizure of 12 tons of meat from pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and alligator (Alligatoridae, Appendix I to II). Two arrests. Alligator is prohibited from being marketed in all seasons and the capture of pirarucu is only authorised under certain conditions from early June to late November.<sup>5</sup>

January 5, 2019

**Itiquira, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil**

Seizure of 455 kg of barred catfish (*Pseudoplatystoma fasciatum*) stored in freezers. Under certain conditions, their fishing is allowed for family consumption (not more than 3 kg).<sup>6</sup>

January 9, 2019

**Poconé, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil**

Seizure of more than 100 kg of spotted sorubim (*Pseudoplatystoma corruscans*) hidden in a car. The driver ran away.<sup>7</sup>

January 21, 2019

**Araguaiana, Mato Grosso State, Brazil**

Arrest of José Marcio Dias Moraes (45 years old) in the act of transporting arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*). Fine of 700 US\$.<sup>8</sup>



January 30, 2019

**Rondonópolis, Mato Grosso State, Brazil**

Seizure in a pickup truck of nearly 500 kg of fish, including barred sorubim (*Pseudoplatystoma fasciatum*) but also dourados (*Salminus brasiliensis*). Additional seizure of 800 m of nets. An arrest.<sup>9</sup>

## CANADA

### OPERATION CAMELEON

October 2018

Trois-Rivières, Quebec Province, Canada

19 convictions, fines ranging from 200 CAN\$ (150 US\$) to 60,500 CAN\$ (46,000 US\$) for fishing lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*, Appendix II) out of the fishing season, with unauthorized boats, without a permit, without reporting the catches, with forged declarations; also for illegal possession and “wasting” sturgeons and other fish, for illegally purchasing sturgeons and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) and selling migratory birds. In addition to the fines, the hunting permit was cancelled for a 2-year period; the commercial sturgeon fishing permit for Lake Saint-Pierre, the Saint-Laurence River and upstream from the city of Quebec was suspended for 2 to 3 years. See “On the Trail” n°7 p.4.<sup>10</sup>



## CHILE

End of November 2018

Chacalluta Border Complex, Region of Arica and Parinacota, Chile. Border to Peru.

The Chilean traveller was attempting to go home with 63 ornamental fish divided into 33 water bags.<sup>11</sup>

## ECUADOR

November 2018

Galapagos Marine Reserve, Ecuador

A member of the crew of the Chinese *Fu Yuan Yuan Yu Leng 999* spilled the beans after a year in prison in Ecuador. The thousands of sharks of 4 species listed in CITES Appendix II (scalloped hammerhead sharks [*Sphyrna lewini*], silky sharks [*Carcharhinus falciformis*]), bigeye threshers [*Alopias superciliosus*] and pelagic threshers [*Alopias pelagicus*]) that were seized in the holds came from several Chinese vessels belonging to Fuzhou Hongglong Ocean Aquatic Products registered in Fujian province and not from Taiwanese vessels as the initial evidence claimed. See “On the Trail” n°18 p.9.<sup>12</sup>

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

December 11, 2018

Honolulu International Airport, Hawaii State, United States of America

Seizure of 95kg of fins from oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*, Appendix II), silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II) and bigeye thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*, Appendix II) with a commercial value of 57,850 US\$ or 670 US\$ per kg in the luggage of 10 Indonesian sailors. After disembarking from the *M.V. Kyoshin Maru n°20* outside U.S. territorial waters, they reached Pier 36 in Honolulu Harbour on a water taxi before proceeding to the airport under the responsibility of the consignee agent appointed by the Japanese-owner, and returning to their country with pre-paid tickets. The longliner ship with the captain and 2 Japanese officers on board then headed for Japan after a year-long fishing trip in the Pacific Ocean during which, according to initial testimony from the suspects, about 300 sharks were caught, stunned and finned before being discarded at sea. The 10 Indonesian sailors were charged with attempting to smuggle endangered species and each face several years in prison. They were released on probation pending trial. The shipowner, the fishing cooperative, the captain of the vessel Hiroyuki Kasagami, the fishing master Toshiyuki Komatsu, and the chief engineer Hiroshi Chiba have been charged as well. These 3 individuals are probably currently in Japan or are still fishing. They face several years in prison and millions of dollars in fines for violations of the Lacey Act, which prohibits trade in wildlife, plants or animals that are illegally caught, held, transported or sold. The *M.V. Kyoshin Maru No. 20* is spotted in Shimizu, Japan, since November 2018.<sup>13</sup>



*M.V. Kyoshin Maru n°20* in Japan

## HONDURAS

Mid-January 2019

### Barra de Caratasca, Gracias a Dios department, Honduras

Seizure of more than 400 kg of meat from hammerhead sharks (family Sphyrnidae) stored in barrels and bags containing fins. Arrest of 33 people and confiscation of 3 boats.<sup>14</sup>



## MEXICO

October 2, 2018

### Mexico City International Airport, Mexico

271 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I), 247 of which are 12 to 24 cm long and 24 about 30 cm long, were discovered in the abandoned suitcase of a passenger from Panama City. They were hidden in plastic pockets under various articles of men's clothing.<sup>15</sup>

October 25, 2018

### Mexico City International Airport, Mexico

Five totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) approximately 35 cm long with an estimated commercial value of nearly 15,000 US\$ were seized from the hand luggage of a passenger of Chinese origin and Mexican nationality travelling to Shanghai on an Aeromexico flight.

Until the end of the investigation, which has a fixed duration of 2 and a half months, the offender is prohibited from leaving the country and is required to report to the police station every 15 days. In addition, he was required to pay a 500 US\$ bail.<sup>16</sup>



November 4, 2018

### Between Puertecitos and San Felipe, State of Baja California, Mexico

On the road to Mexicali, a common meeting place for trafficking (see "On the Trail" n°7 p. 5, n°8 p. 5, n°15 p. 8, n°20 p. 16), 33 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) with a total weight of 5 kg were seized from an intercepted suspect vehicle. It was confiscated, and the driver arrested.<sup>17</sup>



## PERU

End of November 2018

### Port of Callao, Province of Callao, Peru

Raid in the port of Callao by the BOE (Brigada de Operaciones Especiales) of customs. Seizure of 27 tons of shark fins in shipping containers destined for China. The cargo belongs to 5 companies :

- Angaff Perú, founded in 2013 in Lima. Exported 300,000 US\$ of seafood products from Ecuador to China in 2018.

- Huiman S.A.C., founded in 2016 in Lima. Import of 350,000 US\$ worth of seafood products from Ecuador, and export of 800,000 US\$ worth to China in 2018.

- Inversiones Perú Flippers, founded in 2015. Export of 421,000 US\$ worth of seafood products to Hong Kong.

- Marea Blue, founded in 2017. Export of 57,000 US\$ worth of seafood products in 2018.

- Lamarqocha Inversiones SAC, co-founded by a Chinese investor. Export of 7 million US\$ worth of seafood products between July 2016 and September 2018.

Global seizure is equivalent to the capture of at least 7,000 sharks. The value is estimated at 700,000 US\$, equivalent to 26US\$/kg on the local market. Finning sharks and dumping their mutilated bodies at sea has been prohibited in Peru since November 2016.

The investigation is ongoing. Initial elements show that the fins have been surreptitiously imported from Ecuador. Several of the managers or their relatives are involved in illegal fish trafficking. In March, 51 bags containing 1.2 t of fins worth 31,000 US\$ were seized by Chimbote Customs. One of Angaff Perú's managers, Pinto Panduro (24 years old), is involved in this case.

Peruvian customs have also identified the Tumbes-based company Génesis Naomi as a fin trafficker. Its manager, Maceda Vidal, is a member of the group "Los Piratas de Puerto Pizarro" which was engaged in fraudulent sales of fish and other seafood products in the north of the country and in Ecuador.<sup>18</sup>

CHINA

December 1, 2018

**Hong Kong International Airport, China**

Seizure of approximately 100,000 glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), 30 kg in total, in 4 suitcases of 2 men aged 24 and 60 years, travelling from Lisbon, Portugal, via Moscow.<sup>19</sup>

**OPERATION SY608**

December 26, 2018

**Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces, China**

Seizure of 444.3 kg of totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I). Value : 182 million yuan (26.5 million US\$, or 59,000US\$/kg). Sixteen arrests.<sup>20</sup>



January 11, 2019

**Province of Qinghai, China**

A couple who cooked a naked carp (*Gymnocypris przewalskii*) endemic to the Qinghai salt water lake and thus called because it is almost flake-free was fined 1,500 US\$. The top chefs filmed themselves cutting the carp into fillets and were spotted by vigilantes on the Internet. This is the third time in 3 months that gourmets have been fined for setting their sights on the rare naked carp.<sup>21</sup>



INDIA

January 21, 2019

**Chennai International Airport, Meenambakkam District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Seizure of 14 kg of shark fins. Value: 11,220 US\$ or 800 US\$/kg. Mr. Saleem was about to fly to Singapore on a Scoot Airline flight. He also held 46,300 US\$ in English, Canadian, Norwegian and Qatari currencies.<sup>22</sup>



January 22, 2019

**Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary, Kendrapara District, Odisha State, India**

At night, the *Narsimulu* trawler registered in Andhra Pradesh was illegally operating in the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary off Odisha. The Coast Guard boarded and searched it. Seizure of 147 bull sharks (*Carcharhinus leucas*), 26 spot-tail sharks (*Carcharhinus sorrah*), 2 hammerhead sharks (family Sphyrnidae), 50 longlines and all electronic fishing assistance equipment. The sharks are all juveniles. They weigh between 35 and 45 kg.<sup>23</sup>



PAKISTAN

January 1, 2019

**Ibrahim Hyderi Port, Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan**

An illegally caught whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) disappeared before reaching the port of Karachi. It was 5m long and weighed 5 tons. It should have been handed over to the port authorities, but the sailors probably cut it up into pieces and hid it or mixed it with the other fish.<sup>24</sup>

## THAILAND

**December 19 and 20, 2018**

### **Suvarnabhumi Airport, Samut Prakan Province, Thailand**

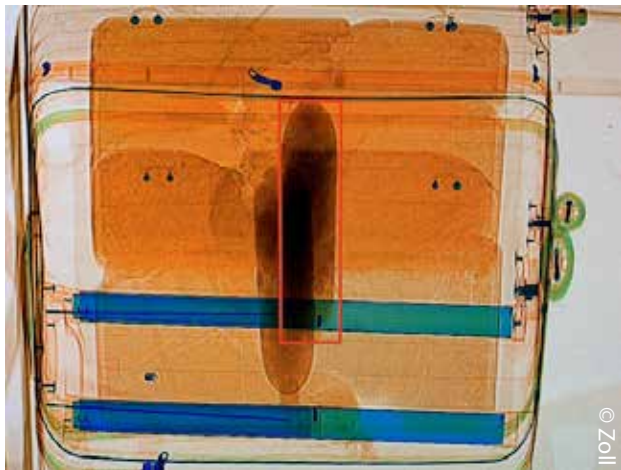
Customs seizure of 700 kg of glass eels worth an estimated 40 million baht (1.27 million US\$). The 2 shipments from Romania were reported as “frozen shrimp.” The fry were intended for catering. At this stage, it is not proven that the final destination was Thailand. It is in a large country further east that glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) are most valued, both in terms of taste and financial value.<sup>25</sup>

## EUROPE

## GERMANY

**November 28, 2018**  
**Frankfurt Airport, State of Hesse, Germany**

Several thousand glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) were seized from the luggage of a woman with a Malaysian passport travelling to Viet Nam. Probable origin: estuary of southwestern Europe - France, Portugal, Spain. The smuggler was not immediately investigated because she was already on the plane when the contraband was discovered. The glass eels were dumped into the Rhine which flows into the North Sea.<sup>26</sup>



Polystyrene boxes containing frozen water bottles to put the glass eels in a lethargic state.

**December 19, 2018**

### **Frankfurt Airport, State of Hesse, Germany**

About 100,000 glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) were discovered in the 3 suitcases of a Malaysian national traveling from Paris to Frankfurt by car, and planning to fly to Viet Nam via Moscow. The glass eels, with value between 150,000 € and 300,000 €, were released into the Rhine. The smuggler was also released after paying a small fee of 2,000 €.<sup>27</sup>



## SPAIN

### **OPERACION TARANTELO**

**Mid-October, 2018**

#### **Spain**

Malta and Spain are at the heart of an illegal traffic that is significant in volume and carries health risks. 80 tons of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) were seized in Spain. Traffic of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna not in compliance with the reporting requirements prescribed by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas is estimated to reach 2,500 tons with a turnover of 12.5 million € (see “On the Trail” n°11 p. 8, n°12 p. 10, n°13 p. 11, n°16 p. 10, 105, n°18 p. 12, n°19 p. 13, n°21 p. 13).<sup>28</sup>

**End of November 2018**

### **Ondarroa, Province of Vizcaya, Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, Spain**

Seizure of 20 mackerel sharks (*Lamna nasus*, Appendix II) landed from one of the port's 2 longliners authorized to catch blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*). The captain of the vessel (who tried to mislead the inspectors by falsifying his electronic logbook), an employee of the fish market and the owners of the vessel were heard by the courts. The boat had been under surveillance for a year.<sup>29</sup>

## FRANCE

**2018**

### **Department of French Guiana, France**

Track record of the FAG (Armed Forces in French Guiana) in 2018 in conjunction with other State services: 87 actions on suspicious boats. Seizures on board of 342 kg of acoupas swim bladders, same family as totoabas, and 190 km of nets. In addition, 105 km of illegal nets were removed by an ERF (Embarcation Remonte Filets), a ship dedicated to lift up the illegal nets at sea.<sup>30</sup>

**November 2018-January 2019  
Boulogne-sur-Mer, Pas-de-Calais Department,  
France**

The scientific program of the Great Nausicaa, which had imported 30 hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II) and a couple of Manta rays from Australia and Indonesia, turned into a nightmare. As of January 1, 2019, 28 female sharks had died in a holding tank, without ever having been exhibited in the vast aquarium of which they were supposed to be the stars. Apparently, the baby sharks fought each other, revealing an unexpected intergeneric aggressiveness. The autopsy reports were not published. The female Manta ray died of an infestation by intestinal parasites, while the male remains alone in the aquatic show with other exotic fish and schools of sardines. The reproduction in captivity in Boulogne-sur-Mer of this mythical and endangered species is no longer relevant unless the Minister of Ecology agrees to issue a new import permit and Nausicaa, after losing 3 million euros in the shark slaughter, invests 2 to 300,000 euros in the purchase of a new female Manta ray.<sup>31</sup>

**January 31, 2019  
Pyrénées-Atlantiques department, France**

Seizure of 897 kg of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) from a highway parking. This seizure, estimated at nearly 500,000 €, represents nearly 3 million glass eels. It alone is equivalent to the 4 seizures made in Nouvelle-Aquitaine region in 2018. 18,000 € in cash was also seized.<sup>32</sup>



**FAMILY AFFAIR /GANG  
REPEATED OFFENSE  
December 5th and 6th, 2018  
and February 8th, 2019  
Nantes, Loire-Atlantique  
Department, France**

The joint investigation by the Nantes Research Brigade, OCLAESP (Central Office for Combating Environmental and Public Health Damage), ONEMA (National Office for Water and Aquatic Environments), GIR (Regional Intervention Group) and Maritime Affairs had resulted in the dismantling of a gang of European eel traffickers (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) from the Loire



estuary to the Spanish Basque country (cf. "On the Trail" n°13, p.11). The trial of the 9 accused for trafficking in protected species in organized gangs, concealed work, money laundering, concealment, breach of trust and abuse of corporate assets was held in December 2018 and resulted in February 2019 in the sentencing of 9 gang members to 1 to 2 years adjustable jail, fines of 5,000 € to 30,000 € and a ban on professional fishing and European eel trading for 5 years. Among them were professional fishermen and fishmongers, a father and his sons and repeat offenders. They were also ordered to pay sea and river fishing organizations and environmental NGOs 230,000 € for ecological and moral damage, including 22,500 € to Robin des Bois. Nearly 700,000 € of criminal assets (cash, bank accounts, real estate, Porsche, Mercedes, Harley Davidson, pleasure boat, jewelry...) were confiscated. The convicts have all appealed. The case has ramifications, particularly in the French Basque country where another investigation is under way.<sup>33</sup>

**ITALY**

**OPERATION RED LUPIN  
End of October / beginning of November 2018  
Maiori, Campania Region, Italy**

Interrogation of Mr M., also called the "Arsène Lupin of bluefin tuna" (*Thunnus thynnus*), who had been dodging the police for about 10 years. His mission was to recover dead tuna from traps marked with buoys near reefs. The vigilance of the Maritime Gendarmerie had been reinforced in the previous week by the seizure of 300 kg of bluefin tuna on the road from Maiori to Salerno. A large-scale operation was launched at nightfall with hideouts and surveillance by plainclothes agents blending among the local population. M.M., who is referred to in the local press as an "illegal fishing magician", was arrested on his motorcycle with 20 small tunas in buckets fixed to the luggage rack.<sup>34</sup>

**November 2018  
Turin, Piedmont Region, Italy**

Seizure of shark teeth offered for sale in a store in the Porta Palazzo market run by 2 Moroccan nationals. In a nearby store, about thirty carpets fraudulently sold under the appellation of cashmere were seized.<sup>35</sup>

**November 8, 2018  
Maiori, Campania Region, Italy**

- 30 juvenile bluefin tunas (*Thunnus thynnus*) in a net marked by a buoy off Maiori, dead and smaller than the regulatory weight, 1.6 kg on average. Intended to be recovered at night, all lights off.  
- 80 juveniles in a similar net.<sup>36</sup>



**November 13, 2018**

**Roseto Capo Spulico, Calabria Region, Italy**

Seizure of 50 bluefin tunas (*Thunnus thynnus*) weighing 370 kg from a truck trailer. The average weight of each tuna was 7.4 kg, well below the minimum regulatory weight of 30 kg. Considered unfit for consumption by the veterinary authorities, they were destroyed.<sup>37</sup>

**December 7, 2018**

**Prato, Tuscany Region, Italy**

Ten carabinieri with multiple specialties (CITES, labor law, food fraud) and assisted by interpreters, had a search warrant to raid a food and drink wholesale business run by a Chinese national. They seized a golden dragon fish (*Scleropages formosus*, Appendix I) worth 50,000 US\$. When a specimen is presented at an international aquarists' competition, it is accompanied by an armed escort. The carabinieri also seized carved ivories and the accounting and administrative documents concerning large batches of wine, among other things. Three days later, there was a conference at the city hall with Giorgio Sturlese Tosi, journalist and author of "The Italian Triade. How the Chinese Mafia Conquered Italy."<sup>38</sup>

**End of December 2018**

**Guglielmo Marconi International Airport, Bologna, Emilia Romagna Region, Italy**

Seizure of 800 g of sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) divided into 8 jars discovered in the personal belongings of a Russian passenger. Fine of 5,000 €. <sup>39</sup>

**NETHERLANDS**

**Early October 2018**

**Netherlands**

Seizure of 150 g of sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) from Iran, divided into 3 jars. Beyond 125 g, an import permit is required. As a result, a box was seized. One may wonder what became of it.<sup>40</sup>



**UNITED KINGDOM**

**January 31, 2019**

**United Kingdom**

38% of shark fins sold in Asian restaurants and supermarkets come from scalloped hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II). 90% of the fish sold in fish and chips shops come from dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*), sold under the names of "huss" and "dog fish". The marketing of dogfish is subject to restrictions on the European market. These are the results of the scientific survey conducted by the University of Exeter based on genetic analyses of representative samples carried out between February 2016 and November 2017. The team also conducted DNA analyses of 30 shark fins seized by United Kingdom customs from Mozambique to Asia. They all come from blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*), another threatened species.<sup>41</sup>

**RUSSIA**

**Early October 2018**

**Murmansk, Murmansk Oblast, Northwestern Federal District, Russia**

Attempted street sale in the parking lot of a supermarket of 500 g caviar jars (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) at a price of 17,000 rubles or 260 US\$, equivalent to the average monthly income of a Murmansk resident. Seizure of 20 kg at the trafficker's home.<sup>42</sup>

**End of October 2018**

**Moscow Oblast, Central Federal District, Russia**

Seizure of 50 kg of Amur sturgeon caviar (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II). An interrogation.<sup>43</sup>



**November 2018**

**Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Khabarovsk Krai, Far Eastern Federal District, Russia**

Seizure of one tonne of caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) stored in 2 garages equipped with freezers in 2 separate houses. Value : 50 million rubles, or 720,000 US\$ (720 US\$/kg). They had rented a boat to purchase from poachers. According to the first elements of the investigation, they were selling the goods on the "riviera" of the Black Sea, 8,200 km away.<sup>44</sup>

**GANG**

**November 2018**

**Birsk, Volga Federal District, Russia**

Seizure of at least 180 Siberian or sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II) and 8 kg of caviar. The Volga riverside gang sold poaching products throughout Russia.<sup>45</sup>

**December 13, 2018**

**Kazan, Volga Federal District, Russia**

Questioning of Mikhail Polozun and Aleksei Samodelka. They sold "gifts from the sea and rivers" on the Internet. Seizure of 800 kg of black caviar from great Siberian sturgeons (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) and red caviar.<sup>46</sup>

**SWITZERLAND**

**January 11 and 19, 2019**

**Geneva Airport, Canton of Geneva and Zurich Airport, Canton of Zurich, Switzerland**

Dismantling of a glass eels trafficking network for (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) to the Asian market, where they are sold for up to 6,000 US\$/kg. 110,000 were seized at Zurich Airport on January 11 and 2 people were arrested. A week later, on January 19, 130,000 glass eels were seized and 7 Asian citizens were arrested at Geneva Airport. The glass eels were in plastic bags filled with water, inflated with oxygen and kept cold with bottles full of ice. The glass eels were all released into Lake Murten by the Federal Customs Administration (AFD) and the Federal Office for Food Safety and Veterinary Affairs (FVO), in collaboration with the services of the districts of Vaud and Fribourg.<sup>47</sup>

**UKRAINE**

**Mid-December 2018**

**Kharkiv Station, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine**

11 kg of red caviar (salmon eggs) and 1.1 kg of black caviar (sturgeon eggs, *Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) seized at customs on the Moscow-Kharkiv train. Interrogation of the train crew.<sup>48</sup>

**Otters**



Changi, Singapore

**AMERICA**

**MEXICO**

**November 21, 2018**

**State of Tabasco, Mexico**

Seizure in a bus of a long-tailed otter (*Lontra longicaudis*, Appendix I) and 4 yellow-headed Amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I), all alive.<sup>1</sup>

**ASIA**

**CAMBODIA**

**December 20, 2018**

**Ilbang I, Lumphat District, Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia**

A young smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*, Appendix II) was rescued by a Wildlife Alliance team. She was being held in a cage by the owner of a restaurant near the Ka Tieng waterfall, a tourist attraction in the province. The NGO handed it over to the Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Center.<sup>2</sup>

**THAILAND**

**January 7, 2019**

**Samet, Chonburi Province, Thailand**

Arrest of Natthaphan Chansawang (44 years old) for the illegal detention of 2 otters (*Lutrinae*, Appendix I or II).<sup>3</sup>

## TURKEY

**January 11, 2019**

### **Erzincan Province, Turkey**

Unprecedented decision. Cancellation by the Administrative Court of Appeal of the authorization to build a hydroelectric dam at Çemişgezek, on the Tagar River, a privileged habitat for sea otters (*Enhydra lutris*, Appendix I or II) and chamois.<sup>4</sup>

## VIET NAM

**November 15, 2018**

### **Nam Dinh, Nam Dinh Province, Viet Nam**

Night seizure of 10 Oriental small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II) transported by a trafficker. They are exploited for their fur or as pets. It's "trendy" in Viet Nam.<sup>5</sup>



## EUROPE

## GERMANY

**Mid-December 2018**

### **Franz-Josef-Strauss Airport Munich, State of Bavaria, Germany**

Seizure in a package shipped from Canada to Italy of an otter skull (sub-family *Lutrinae*, Appendix I or II).<sup>6</sup>



## Marine Mammals

## AMERICA

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**October 9, 2018**

### **Los Angeles, State of California, United States of America**

Attempt to sell 2 narwhal tusks (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II) 2m and 2.20m long in January 2017 for a total value of 60,000 US\$. Anthony Buccola was sentenced to a 36 months probation, 200 hours of community service or 20 days in county jail for violating Bill 96, which prohibits the sale of ivory in California. The law is so named because an average of 96 elephants are poached every day in Africa. Buccola and his store "Antonio's Bella Casa" must each pay a fine of 20,507 US\$ including penalty assessments. The tusks were confiscated.<sup>1</sup>



**October 19, 2018**

### **Skagway, State of Alaska, United States of America**



James Terrance Williams, a trader under the brand name "Inside Passage Arts" was charged for fraudulently exporting walrus ivory (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) to Indonesia for carving purposes, and then fraudulently importing worked ivories from Indonesia to the United States.<sup>2</sup>

**January 28, 2019**

### **SeaWorld Orlando, State of Florida, United States of America**

Kayla, an orca (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II) born to a father captured off British Columbia, Canada, and a mother caught off Iceland, has died. The life expectancy of an orca is 45-50 years. The cause of death was not revealed. NGOs, including Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) have taken legal steps to obtain autopsy reports of dead orcas in the SeaWorld basins.<sup>3</sup>

## CHINA

End of December 2018

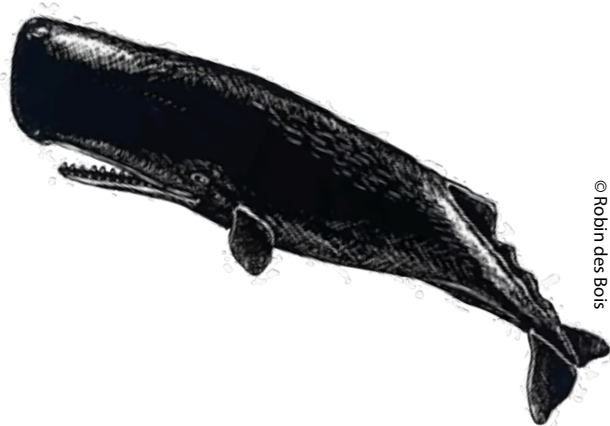
**Shanghai-Pudong International Airport, Shanghai Municipality, China**Seizure of 5 fur seal pelts (*Arctocephalus* spp., Appendix I or II).<sup>4</sup>

## INDIA

October 4, 2018

**GANG****Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India**

The Crime Branch has caught 3 men involved in the international trade of protected species. Arrested in the suburban town of Kalwa, Kashinath Pawar (50 years old), Dilip Birje (49 years old) and Dnyaneshwar More (40 years old) were in possession of bags containing 6 kg pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix I) and 10 kilos of ambergris, a sperm whale intestinal concretion (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I). The value of the seizure is allegedly 200 million rupees (2,755,000 US\$), including more than 2,750,000 US\$ for ambergris (275,000 US\$/kg). Preliminary investigations show that India was only one step and the 3 men were simply middlemen. The final destination was China. Interrogations are still ongoing. The police are trying to reconstruct the suspects' movements, using their cell phones, and to identify their upstream and downstream accomplices in the trafficking business. A fisherman would have lifted up the ambergris block in a net.<sup>5</sup>



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## JAPAN

November 14, 2018

**Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan**Arrival of 1,500 tons of whale meat and fat aboard the *Azure Coast* (ex-*Winter Bay*) belonging to a European ship-owner. The reefer, flying the Saint Kitts and Nevis flag, reached Japan through the North-East Arctic passage from Iceland.<sup>5bis</sup>

December 26, 2018

**Pirate Japan**

Since the ban on commercial whaling came into effect in 1986, Japan has killed more than 22,000 whales and sperm whales, including 10,000 in Antarctica. Japan has made full use of the founding text of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), which allows scientific whaling. Today, Japan announces its intention to withdraw from this Convention signed in 1946 after having made the most of it.

Japan has never interrupted its whaling activities despite the appeals of the majority of IWC Member States, the condemnation by the International Court of Justice and public disapproval.

Today, Japan, renouncing the renewal of its obsolete polar whaling fleet, has decided to withdraw to its territorial and economic waters and to make a mockery of an international convention that participates in the management of the world ocean, and has recognized the positive contribution of whales to marine ecosystems throughout their life cycle, including after their death.

After affirming its presence and supremacy in Antarctica, Japan now intends to express the same arrogance in the Sea of Japan, the Okhotsk Sea, the East China Sea and the Pacific Ocean, where it is about to dump nearly one million cubic meters of radioactive water from Fukushima.

On July 1, 2019, the day after Japan's official exit from the International Whaling Commission, a fleet of 4 to 6 harpoon boats go whaling. The targets of this first unilateral campaign are 25 Minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), 150 Baird's beaked whales (*Berardius bairdii*) and 25 Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*). The number of targets has not yet been set. Sea Shepherd is delighted with this new Japanese posture. According to the NGO, these expeditions in waters under Japanese jurisdiction will be less deadly than the so-called scientific hunting campaigns conducted by an industrial fleet in Antarctica. The NGO Robin des Bois notes with satisfaction that, for the time being, the construction of a new trans-oceanic factory ship to replace the sinister *Nisshin Maru* is no longer a reality. On the other hand, it considers that Japan's withdrawal from the International Whaling Commission may lead other Asian or archipelagic countries down a similar path. "Contagion is not impossible and for us, whales from the Pacific, Atlantic, Arctic or Indian Ocean have as much ecosystem value as whales from Antarctica," says Jacky Bonnemains, spokesman for Robin des Bois. Japan was a major financial contributor to the International Whaling Commission and its Scientific Committee. If the United States, Australia, New Zealand and European countries do not increase their contributions, the effectiveness, competence and influence of the IWC will deteriorate.<sup>6</sup>

## MYANMAR

January 26, 2019

Patheingyi Township, Mandalay region, Myanmar

A male Irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*, Appendix I) was found dead, probably electrocuted by a trawl net connected on a battery on the deck of a fishing vessel. There are only 76 Irrawaddy dolphins left in the river.<sup>7</sup>



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## RUSSIA

Early November, 2018

Near Nakhodka, Primorsky Krai, Russia

The case has been in the air since December 21, 2016 (see "On the Trail" n°14 p. 17, n°15 p. 15). Pens and tents along the Okhotsk Sea have a stock of 11 orcas (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II) and 87 belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*, Appendix II) ready to be delivered on request to Chinese marine zoos. The mammals are in poor condition. They suffer from skin diseases and are unsalable in their current condition, even at a discounted price. There is a risk that they spread their parasitic diseases in importing countries or die on arrival. It is easy to suggest the release of captives; it is difficult to undertake it. The belugas and orcas have been there for more than a year. To believe that they would cheerfully flee if the gates that separate them from the Okhotsk Sea were opened is a sight to the mind. The most favorable option would be to release them back into the water where they were caught. However, this operation would not necessarily be successful for sick animals and greatly exceeds the financial abilities of the 4 companies involved in the traffic, including the LLC Sochi Dolphinarium. It is possible that powerful Chinese interests are behind the scenes. It will be recalled that a Chinese company operating a former Russian trawler, the *Ryazanovka*, specialized in the capture of sea mammals, had been hanging around the port of Windhoek for several months while awaiting an official permit from the Namibian authorities.<sup>8</sup>



© Free Russian Whales

## Marine Turtles

Marine turtles (families Cheloniidae and Dermochelyidae) are listed under CITES Appendix I, including Ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*), loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*).

### AFRICA

#### FRANCE (MAYOTTE)

Early October 2018

Saziley Beach, Mayotte Department, France

250 sea turtle eggs were stolen from Saziley beach. The looter was intercepted by members of ASVM (Association for the security of Mtsamoudou villagers). The eggs were buried again in the sand hoping for a happy outcome.<sup>1</sup>

January 27, 2019

Kani-Keli, Mayotte Department, France

Arrest of 3 members of an organized gang engaged in sea turtle poaching and egg collection on the beaches of the southern part of the island. Seizure of 107 kg of meat and 2 kg of eggs. The individual carrying the meat bags and the garbage bags full of eggs was remanded in custody and sentenced to a year of jail with a detention warrant.<sup>2</sup>



#### GABON

##### OPERATION TURTLES TAHITI

November 19, 2018

Libreville, Estuary Province, Gabon

During the rainy season, Libreville's beaches are even more littered than usual. It is during the same season that olive Ridley turtles come to lay eggs on the beaches around the Gabonese capital. Residents of



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the Tahiti district gather to clean the beach during the egg laying and hatching season so that baby turtles can reach the sea without getting entangled in garbage. Activists talk about the “beach-turtle-waste” problem in public schools and students participate in the beach clean-up, a long-term operation that will last from November 19 to December 19.<sup>3</sup>



## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**October 13, 2018**  
**Maceió, State of Alagoas, Brazil**

The dead female green turtle that had been spotted and filmed by an anonymous bus passenger after being washed up on Jatiúca beach was found in a pile of garbage on Coronel Paranhos Street. She had been stolen from the beach even before the specialists of the Biota Institute (alerted by swimmers) came to collect her.<sup>4</sup>

### COSTA RICA

**End of October 2018**  
**Limón, Province of Limón, Costa Rica**

In the middle of the night, 2 live green turtles were seized, one of which was tied up and flipped over in the trunk of the vehicle while the other was in the backseat. The driver, called Membreno, was arrested and the car was confiscated. The 2 survivors had a narrow escape. They were handed over to a specialized institute. After examination they could be released into the wild.<sup>5</sup>

### MEXICO

**October 16, 2018**  
**Santa María Tonameca, State of Oaxaca, Mexico**  
 1,000 Pacific Ridley sea turtle eggs in 2 backpacks were seized from a bus en route to Puerto Escondido. The eggs were “collected” in the sanctuary of Escobilla Beach. A passenger admitted the ownership.<sup>6</sup>

**Mid-November 2018**  
**San Pedro Huamelula, State of Oaxaca, Mexico**  
 5,300 Pacific Ridley sea turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) were discovered in 6 abandoned bags. The Ridley sea turtles landed on the beach by waves : 1,260 on November 8, 29,596 on November 9, 101,806 on November 10, 66,632 on November 11, 1,950 on November 12 and 15 on November 13. During this laying period, the beaches are actively monitored by PROFEPA (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente) in coordination with SEMAR (Secretaría de Marina Armada de México).<sup>7</sup>

**December 3, 2018**  
**Lázaro Cárdenas, State of Michoacán, Mexico**  
 Apprehension of a man carrying several dozen leatherback turtle or Pacific Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) in a bag on a bus.<sup>8</sup>

**December 4, 2018**  
**Ensenada, State of Baja California, Mexico**  
 90 kg of green turtle in the form of fins, breastplate and meat were seized from a truck.<sup>9</sup>

**December 7, 2018**  
**El Cayaco, State of Guerrero, Mexico**  
 Seizure of 113 leatherback turtle eggs and 7,387 Pacific Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) in a car. PROFEPA identified the species. Interrogation of a woman.<sup>10</sup>



**December 16, 2018**  
**Cabo San Lucas, State of Baja California Sur, Mexico**

Complaint against the company Solar Chaca for crushing turtle nests on El Médano beach inside the Cabo San Lucas protected area with public works machinery during the construction of a luxury hotel.<sup>11</sup>



**December 18, 2018**  
**Ometepec, State of Guerrero, Mexico**  
 Seizure of 23 leatherback turtle eggs and 1,788 Pacific Ridley turtle eggs. Most were ready for sale by the dozen, in plastic bags. Intervention by law enforcement in front of a gas station. Still considered viable, the eggs were put into artificial incubation.<sup>12</sup>

**January 27, 2019**  
**San Pedro Huamelula, State of Oaxaca, Mexico**  
 10,200 eggs of olive ridley turtles were found in 9 nylon bags on a beach. Given the time spent outside their nests, artificial incubation of eggs is impossible. It was decided to bury them.<sup>13</sup>

## NICARAGUA

**October 23, 2018**

### **Rivas, Rivas Department, Nicaragua**

870 Pacific Ridley turtle eggs were seized from a bus on August 5, 2018 from Alejandra Soza. She intended to sell them in Managua. The eggs were stolen from La Flor Wildlife Refuge in San Juan del Sur while in artificial incubation. Ms. Soza is currently in pre-trial detention. The prosecutor requested a year in prison but Ms. Soza asks for a lighter sentence as she is the sole provider for her mentally disabled son and does not receive any aid.<sup>14</sup>

## PANAMA

**Mid-January 2019**

### **Chiriquí, Chiriquí Province, Panama**

Seizure of 15 fragments of hawksbill turtle shells or plastrons hidden in a Costa Rican man's suitcase leaving Panama.<sup>15</sup>

## EL SALVADOR

**Late January 2019**

### **San Salvador, San Salvador department, Salvador**

Opening of the trial of Carmen Lara (47 years old) for illegal detention and sale of 60 eggs of olive ridley turtles. She was arrested on August 25, 2018 in the act of selling (see "On the Trail" n°22, p. 116).<sup>16</sup>

ASIA

## CHINA

**End of November 2018**

### **Donghai County, Jiangsu Province, China**

20 turtle shells, pens, mirrors, bracelets and other items made from scutes were seized from a jewellery store. Commercial value: 1 million yuan (144,000 US\$). 19 suspects in 8 provinces were interrogated. The supply chain began with the capture in the insular province of Hainan, 2,300 km from Jiangsu.<sup>17</sup>

**December 13, 2018**

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

Between January 2016 and May 2017, sale via WeChat to the same buyer of 3 hawksbill turtles for the equivalent of 855 US\$, including transfer by bus. Conviction in April 2018. Six months in prison and a fine of 480 US\$. Information disclosed on December 13, 2018 during a press meeting by the prosecutor of the Yuexiu district.<sup>19</sup>



## INDIA

**November 6 and 10, 2018**

### **Bombay, Maharashtra State and Morjim, Goa State, India**

- The Supreme Court ordered the local government to protect the olive Ridley turtles that lay eggs on Morjim beach and to prohibit jet skis, speedboats and other motorboats in its vicinity.

- Four days later, the police intervened on site to suspend all nautical activities. But the tranquillity of the area is also disturbed by beach parties (known to be popular among Russian tourists) accompanied by fireworks, sound systems, alcohol and waste. The beaches of Morjim and Mandrem to the north of Goa and Agonda and Galgibag to the south are officially designated as laying sites to be protected. The Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA) is responsible for ensuring the long-term protection of beaches. See "On the Trail" n°19 p.17.<sup>20</sup>

## ISRAEL

**January 14, 2019**

### **Mikhmoret, Central District, Israel**

In just 3 days, 46 loggerhead and green turtles were found wounded on Israeli beaches and only 15 could be rescued. The perpetrator of these strandings would be a seismic prospecting vessel flying the Italian flag which for 24 hours emitted crashing underwater sounds every 9 seconds.<sup>21</sup>



## PHILIPPINES

**December 11, 2018**

### **Cebu, Central Visayas Region, Philippines**

60 kg of green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) meat was seized from the freezer of a restaurant. It is common knowledge that in the Barangay Pasil district, sea turtle meat is sold under the name "Power", which implies power of sex. One portion of turtle larang (coconut milk and spice stew), a dish served in popular restaurants, costs 90 pesos (1.7 US\$). The meat seized came from a turtle that had been tagged on a Malaysian beach near Sandakan, 825 km from Cebu.<sup>22</sup>

## SRI LANKA

**December 5, 2018**

### **Vankalai, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

24 kg of turtle meat and shells were seized from a boat returning to the beach.<sup>23</sup>

**December 11, 2018**

### **Kalmunai, Eastern Province, and Jaffna, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure by the Sri Lanka Navy of 2 live sea turtles, 50 kg of Orawa fish (genus *Siganus*), prohibited fishing gear in a boat and 3 dead turtles set aside in thickets near a fish market.<sup>24</sup>

**January 10, 2019**

### **Vankalaipadu, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of 3,185 kg of turtle meat. An arrest.<sup>25</sup>

**January 12, 2019**

### **Nalladarankattuwa, District of Puttalam, North Western Province, Sri Lanka**

Two women were caught red-handed poaching, cutting up sea turtles (25 kg of meat) and collecting eggs (211). They were arrested.<sup>26</sup>

## VIET NAM

**October 3, 2018**

### **Dong Hoa District, Phu Yen Province, Viet Nam**

An 8 kg hawksbill turtle, trapped in a net nearby, was on the menu of a floating restaurant. Education for Nature - Vietnam was alerted and mobilized the authorities although with difficulty. But the turtle was finally seized and released at sea near the Mui Dien Sea Cliff by the provincial fisheries administration and several police forces accompanied by the restaurant owner.<sup>27</sup>

**November 19, 2018**

### **Kien Giang Province, Viet Nam**

Pham Van Tuan and Tran Xuan Mau captured green sea turtles and enticed animal advocates to purchase their freedom by displaying their victims in a restaurant. But it is much better to follow the advice of ENV (Education for Nature – Vietnam) and other NGOs in Asia. Even if it is tempting, you should not buy wild animals in captivity in order to release them. This act of solidarity actually stimulates trafficking. The 2 green turtles were seized and put back into the sea without any compensation given to the 2 poachers other than their criminal trial.<sup>28</sup>

**December 3, 2018**

### **Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam**

An 8 kg green turtle snatched from a trafficker who had put it on sale on social networks was released at sea. Education for Nature - Vietnam had heard of the trafficker and set a trap for him with the help of the provincial environmental police.<sup>29</sup>

## Various Marine Species

### AMERICA

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Late October, 2018**

### **United States of America**

The justice system considers it illegal and a result of an abuse of power that the Trump administration has withdrawn a plan to reduce unintentional catches of fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*, Appendix I), long-beaked common dolphins (*Delphinus capensis*, Appendix II), Risso's dolphins (*Grampus griseus*, Appendix II), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), northern right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*, Appendix I), gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*, Appendix I), Pacific white-sided dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*, Appendix II), hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*), megamouth sharks (*Megachasma pelagios*), basking sharks (*Cetorhinus maximus*, Appendix II), white sharks (*Carcharodon carcharias*, Appendix II) and Manta rays (*Manta* spp. Appendix II) by the 20 boats authorized off the coast of California to deploy 1.8 kilometers of long driftnets to target swordfish. This plan was adopted by the Obama administration in 2015.<sup>1</sup>



## MEXICO

October 14, 2018

Merida, Yucatán State, Mexico



Incinerated and buried in a landfill designated for seized and unsafe seafood and other miscellaneous items : 506.82 kg of milk conch (*Lobatus costatus*), 199.16 kg of lamp shell conch (*Turbinella angulata*), 126.4 kg of octopus (*Octopus maya*), 118.82 kg of sea cucumbers, 16.2 kg of shark fins, as well as 35 kg of marijuana and 20 g of cocaine.

The milk conch measures 10 to 20 cm. It is found in Caribbean waters from Florida to Venezuela. Its name comes from the colour of its shell, which is opaline. It feeds on algae, phanerogams and organic detritus. The milk conch stands upright, and moves itself forward in bounds using its peduncle which it also uses to dig in the sand. It is targeted due to its resemblance to the Queen conch (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II).<sup>2</sup>



## ASIA

### CHINA

December 6, 2018

Xiamen, Fujian Province, China

The Chinese citizen was arriving from Manila, Philippines. Customs officers, when examining so-called coffee packets, immediately noticed that the touch and consistence was far from coffee beans or ground coffee. The packets contained 30 bracelets and other hawksbill sea turtle shell jewellery (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I), shells of horned helmets (*Cassis cornuta*), conchs (family Strombidae), spider conchs (genus *Lambis*) and top-shells (family Trochidae).<sup>18</sup>

## Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

### Cumulative quarterly seizures: Examples

7,363 Madagascar radiated turtles

(*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I)

3,009 Indian flapshell turtles

(*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II)

1,394 Indian star tortoises

(*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)

## AFRICA

### MADAGASCAR

October 23, 2018

Toliara, Atsimo-Andrefana county, Madagascar

Justice for turtles in the Toliara courthouse:

-It was a house of horror (cf. " On the Trail" n°18 p. 22). Nearly 11,000 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) in the sinks, cellars, and under the stairs. The 3 defendants, Ramanandraibe Maximin, Vesoa Ordene and Randriarison Pulchérie Colombe are sentenced to 6 years in prison, 30,000 US\$ and 8,800 US\$ for damages to the Ministry of the Environment.

- In another turtle trafficking affair, 2 Chinese citizens were also sentenced to 6 years in prison and 30,000 US\$.<sup>1</sup>



End of October 2018

Madagascar

Seizure of 7347 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) in a village 70 km from Tulear, where 10,000 turtles of the same species had been seized 6 months earlier (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.19). Less than 72 hours after the seizure, 118 turtles were already dead.<sup>1 bis</sup>

## TANZANIA

Mid-December 2018

Singida Region, Tanzania

Arrest of Jafari Shongwe (54 years old) with 114 leopard turtles (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II), for a total value of 8,000 US\$. Shongwe was arrested while travelling 730 km by bus with the turtles hidden in his bag. They were intended for the European or North American market.<sup>2</sup>

## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**October 2, 2018**  
**Obidos, State of Pará, Brazil**

Seizure in the hold of a boat bound for Manaus of 11 live yellow-headed sideneck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) and 500 eggs hidden in plastic bags in the middle of a banana shipment.<sup>3</sup>

**October 4, 2018**  
**Porto Velho, Rondonia State, Brazil**

Arrest of 2 women in possession of drugs, ammunition and 4 turtles. They admitted that they had already sold a turtle for 500 real, or 134 US\$.<sup>4</sup>

**December 13, 2018**  
**Vilhena, Rondônia State, Brazil**

2.4 kg of turtle meat (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II) were seized from a car bound for Minas Gerais. The driver was fined 5,000 real (1,300 US\$) per animal.<sup>5</sup>



### COLOMBIA

**End of December 2018**  
**Departments of Putumayo, Caquetá y Amazonas, Colombia**

Since the beginning of the year, 9,222 Tartaruga eggs (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II) have been seized on the shores of the upper Amazon river. They breed on sandbanks during the dry season. A female lays 60 to 140 eggs. Eggs seized by the Colombian Navy are generally sent to the regional departments of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and placed in artificial incubation for 45 days. After they hatch, the small turtles are released into the river.<sup>6</sup>

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**GANG**  
**December 21, 2018**  
**Columbia, State of South Carolina, United States of America**

facebook

William Thomas Gangemi (26 years old) pleads guilty in the case of turtle trafficking between Hong Kong and the United States in 2016 (see "On the Trail" n°20 p.24 and n°21 p.20). Gangemi was in charge of supplying the turtles to Steven Verren Baker, the gang leader, with whom he was talking via Facebook. Now the other 4 members of the network have also pleaded guilty.<sup>8</sup>

## ASIA

### CAMBODIA

**October 30, 2018**  
**Sre Ambel, Kaoh Kong Province, Cambodia**

A Wildlife Alliance patrol came across a man on a motorcycle who, when he saw them, dumped a bag and fled on foot into the forest. In the bag the rangers found an Asiatic softshell turtle (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II). They released her the next day.<sup>9</sup>



### CHINA

**Early October 2018**  
**Guangzhou (Canton), Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 75 baby map turtles, of the *Graptemys* species, (*Graptemys* spp., Appendix III in the USA and/or Canada), 5 cm in diameter. The species is listed in Appendix III in the United States of America and Canada. The parcel post, from the United States, had been declared as "baby snacks" worth 48 US\$.<sup>10</sup>

## ECUADOR

**December 11, 2018**  
**Yasuní National Park, Ecuador**

Plan for the redeployment of Tartaruga (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II) and Cayenne podocnemis (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II). To avoid the collection of eggs for commercial purposes, they are collected from the banks of the park's rivers and incubated in sand traps for 60 days. After hatching, the newborns are placed for 20 days in basins filled with water, sand and lined with yuccas and sweet potatoes. Twenty days later, they are released back into the park. Several school classes in the district participated in this sowing.<sup>7</sup>



**October 2018**

**Sanya Phoenix International Airport, Hainan Province, China**

Discovery of a living turtle hidden in a passenger's crotch during a security check.<sup>11</sup>

**INDIA**

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**October 4, 2018**

**Kolkata, West Bengal State, India**

Rohan Ranjan (24 years old) doesn't seem very interested in his master of computer applications. He's a repeat offender of turtle trafficking. This time, officers from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) set him up by posing as buyers. He had brought 10 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) in a box to the meeting. During his interrogation he admitted to buying the turtles in Chennai and reselling them in Calcutta where their prices vary between 4,000 and 6,000 rupees each (from 55 to 82 US\$). Presented the next day before a municipal court, he was sentenced to 7 days of detention.<sup>12</sup>

**October 6, 2018**

**Chennai, Tamil Nadu State, India**

A team of 4 traffickers (including 2 women) was traced from Andhra Pradesh. After arriving by bus at the Koyambedu bus station, they went directly to an inn in the Mylapore district where the officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and the Advanced Institute of Wildlife Conservation caught them. They held 582 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and a pair of African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II). The reptiles had been packed in crates for 5 days without water or food. Officers identified 240 juveniles (under 6 months old), 159 sub-adults (under 3 years old) and 183 adults poached in the forests of Andhra Pradesh for export to Southeast Asian countries. They were taken by ambulance to the Vandalur Zoo where they joined more than 3,000 others seized over the past 2 years.<sup>13</sup>

**October 15, 2018**

**Roorkee, Uttarakhand State, India**

Three young men were travelling at night in a Tata indigo towards the city. Failing to stop at a police checkpoint, Raju, Moharram Ali and Wazid were pursued and found in possession of 2 turtles. They were arrested and the car was seized.<sup>14</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**November 1, 2018**

**Neoria, Pilibhit District, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

Seizure of a living trionyx (family Trionychidae) over 8 kg. Bhola Rai is arrested in his village of Neoria. His son managed to escape. According to Bhola Rai, the turtle came from the Devha River, but given its size, it was more likely caught in the Ramganga River, more than 300km north of Neoria.<sup>15</sup>

**November 2, 2018**

**Meerut District, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

Arrest of Sumit Garg (22), for the illegal detention of 12 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and 5 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). They were hidden in his backpack. Garg had picked them up at New Delhi station in a package from Chennai. In India they sell for between 55 and 680 US\$ depending on their age and the social status of the buyer.<sup>16</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Chennai, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Discovery of 490 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) abandoned in the fishing port of Kasimedu. Hidden in boxes, they were destined for Kuala Lumpur on a Thai Air flight.<sup>17</sup>



**November 11, 2018**

**Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra State, India**

Arrest of Kondaiah and Srikant, from Andhra Pradesh, with 300 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) hidden in 2 small boxes and backpacks. A third man managed to escape.<sup>18</sup>

**Mid-November 2018**

**Jaipur, State of Rajasthan, India**

Arrest of Sangeeta, a 30-year-old woman living in Delhi, with 38 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I). According to her, they were intended to treat her brother's tuberculosis, but the police think she was actually going to sell them in Delhi.<sup>19</sup>

**November 16, 2018**

**Banthra, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

During their transport to South-East Asian countries via West Bengal and Bangladesh, seizure of 1,583 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) piled in jute bags. Arrests of Sushanto Sarkar and Saif Ali. Five days later, nearly 150 turtles had died from dehydration and injuries.<sup>20</sup>

**November 28, 2018**

**Bharthana, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

Seizure of 654 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) from a pond. The turtles (Sundhari, in the local dialect) had been gathered there by Raj Kapoor, the gang leader, who feared police intervention. 482 turtles had already died and 172 were seriously ill. Raj Kapoor and his accomplices managed to escape.<sup>21</sup>



**December 20, 2018**

**Chennai International Airport, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Seizure of 4,800 red-eared slider turtles (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) found alive in 2 boxes hidden in the luggage of 2 passengers arriving from Bangkok on a Thai Airways flight. The 2 Indian nationals - Batcha Abdul Vahabaged (68 years old) and Mujibur Rahman (22 years old) - were each fined one million rupees (14,300 US\$). Considered to be an invasive species, the turtles were sent back to Thailand.<sup>22</sup>

**January 4, 2019**

**Swarupnagar, District of North 24 Parganas, State of West Bengal, India**

Seizure of 83 live Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II).<sup>23</sup>

**January 11, 2019**

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

Seizure of 327 turtles hidden in luxury cars en route to West Bengal. The turtles were destined for countries in Southeast Asia via Bangladesh. Arrest of Ram Saran Prajapati, Kishan Gopal, Rakshpal Singh, and Khokan Mandal.<sup>24</sup>

**January 15, 2019**

**Durgapur Train Station, District of Bardhaman, State of West Bengal, India**

Seizure of 689 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata punctata*, Appendix II) dead or alive, distributed in 22 bags at the Doon Express station. Four young people from the Sultanpur district in Uttar Pradesh were arrested. They were going to deliver the Indian flapshell turtles to the Hooghly district before a possible export to Bangladesh.<sup>25</sup>

**January 25, 2019**

**Erandwane, Pune District, Maharashtra State, India**

Criminal Police Unit III arrested Prashant Satpute (29 years old) at his home and seized 2 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II).<sup>26</sup>

**INDONESIA**

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**October 4, 2018**

**Central Jakarta, Special Capital Region of Jakarta, Indonesia**

Rudy Hartono was sentenced to 5 months' suspended prison, 10 months' conditional release and a fine of 328 US\$ for the detention of 5 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I), including one dead, and one Angonoka turtle (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I), from Madagascar and the Sahel. They did not have health certificates. Already in August, Daniel Rooseno had been sentenced to 3 months' suspended prison, 6 months' of parole and a fine of 65 US\$ for receiving 2 radiated tortoises from Madagascar without a health certificate. These 2 convictions based on the lack of a health certificate are a step forward in the fight against the smuggling of endangered species, but as the Director of the organization Traffic in Southeast Asia points out, it is a dodge from magistrates to fill a gap in Indonesian regulations, which until now has not taken into account the smuggling of exotic species listed on the CITES Appendices.<sup>27</sup>



**January 31, 2019**

**Manyaran, Wonogiri Regency, Central Java Province, Island of Java, Indonesia**

Seizure of a magnificent Asiatic softshell turtle (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II), 50 years old and approximately 1m long.<sup>28</sup>



## MALAYSIA

**October 30, 2018**

**Selangor District, State of Selangor, Malaysia**

Sentencing of Abdul Razak Abdul Shukor (29 years old) and Mohd Hazwan Musa'Almudin (31 years old) to 5 years' imprisonment and a fine of 55,000 US\$ each for the illegal detention of 31 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), 6 males, 6 juveniles and 19 females. The 2 men, customs officers at the time of their arrest in May 2018, had knowingly collected the 2 bags on a luggage conveyor at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.<sup>29</sup>



EUROPE

## GERMANY

**December 23, 2018**

**Düsseldorf Airport, State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany**

Seizure of 3 Chinese three-keeled pond turtle (*Mauremys reevesii*, Appendix III in China) without papers, hidden in a transparent box in the hand luggage of a 44-year-old Chinese national living in Cologne and returning from a stay in China.<sup>30</sup>



## ITALY

**Mid-December 2018**

**Pozzallo, Sicily Region, Italy**

Seizure of 70 g of drugs and 5 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II). An arrest.<sup>31</sup>

## Snakes



AFRICA

## ZIMBABWE

**November 19, 2018**

**Gwanda, Southern Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**

Sentence of Memezi Siziba Bvute (36 years old) to 9 years in prison for illegally keeping a 2.7m long python skin worth 1,500 US\$. It was found under his bed. After leaving the courtroom, Bvute lost his mind and began to imitate a snake by crawling on the ground, but this did not prevent him from ending up in prison.<sup>1</sup>



## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**November 27, 2018**  
**Pirassununga, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Seizure of marijuana and a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*) native to the United States of America and known in Brazil under the name of maize snake. Fine of 2,200 real (591 US\$) for illegal possession of an alien species.<sup>2</sup>



**Mid-January 2019**  
**Indaiatuba, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Seizure of at least 3 exotic wild snakes in a post office inside a package. The recipient's home was searched. Eight other snakes were seized. The traffickers were fined approximately 900 US\$.<sup>3</sup>



### PERU

**October 22, 2018**  
**Cajamarca, Cajamarca Region, Peru**

Seizure of 2 boas (*Boidae*, Appendix I or II) at San Antonio Market, both used to attract customers who are fond of snake oil creams.<sup>4</sup>

### VENEZUELA

**Mid-December 2018**  
**San Felix, Bolivar State, Venezuela**

Vainglory: exhibition on the roof of a Chevrolet of the body of an anaconda (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II) poached in the Orinoco.<sup>5</sup>



## ASIA

### CHINA

**Early October 2018**  
**Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China**

Arrest of the person suspected of bringing an albino Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) into China in September. See "On the Trail" n°22 p.27.<sup>6</sup>

**December 4, 2018**  
**Jinan Customs, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure of an Australian green tree python (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II) from the luggage of a female Chinese passenger.<sup>7</sup>

**January 19, 2019**  
**Xiamen, Fujian Province, China**

Seizure of 259 python gall bladders (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) from several passengers disembarking from an unidentified flight.<sup>8</sup>



### INDIA

**October 9, 2018**  
**Pimpalgaon Khamb, Maharashtra State, India**

The circumstances of the death of Vikram Singh Malout (38 years old) have been clarified by a police investigation. This snake hunter from Punjab died in the hospital on October 4 following a bite allegedly inflicted on him by a reptile in the Samangaon forest. But investigators discovered that he had in fact visited Balu Borade, who illegally held several poisonous snakes in his pavilion, the day before. He handled the animals there with 7 other people who filmed themselves with their mobile phones. It was there that Malout was bitten on a finger. His accomplices invented the story of the accident in the forest, but the police came across the videos. Four people were arrested and charged with offences under the Penal Code and the Wildlife Protection Act.<sup>9</sup>

**GANG**  
**October 23 and 25, 2018**  
**Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra State, India**

A gang attempted to sell 850 ml of snake venom worth 1,700,000 rupees (23,420 US\$) but the buyer was an undercover police officer. After obtaining a sample and having it analyzed, the officers arranged an appointment with the traffickers on the Mandwa pier. As soon as they disembarked the ferry, Rajaram Ramsomaru Jaiswar (46) and Udaynath Ramjeet Jaiswar (37) were arrested in possession of the bottle of venom. Originally from the State of Gujarat, the 2 men gave the names of their suppliers in the town of Vapi. Two days later, criminal police officers went to Gujarat to arrest Devilal Ramprasad Joshi (36 years old) and Santoshkumar Surendraprasad Singh (35 years old). They allegedly obtained the venom from a man in Uttar Pradesh. An investigation is underway to bring the network down.<sup>10</sup>



**October 24, 2018**  
**Pune, Maharashtra State, India**

Deepal Salunkhe (23 years old) and his minor accomplice hoped to sell a brown sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) in the city for 1.2 million rupees (16,530 US\$). But someone tipped off the police officer Krishna Badhe. When they arrived in Narhe's neighbourhood, a trap was waiting for them. They were detained while the reptile was resettled in the Rajiv Gandhi Zoological Park.<sup>11</sup>

**October 25, 2018**  
**Nallampalayam, Arilayur District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

A10,000 rupees (138 US\$) fine was imposed by the forestry administration on K. Manickam for capturing and bringing home a sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II). The reptile was released into the Mangarai forest.<sup>12</sup>

**Early November 2018**  
**Delhi, India**

An Indian cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), an Oriental rat snake (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II) and a sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) were released into their natural habitat after being seized from Beeja Nath and Shekpal Nath.<sup>13</sup>

**Early November 2018**  
**Kochi, State of Kerala, India**

Abdul Kalam Azad (40 years old), Rajesh Menon (33 years old) and Kishore (36 years old) were arrested. Seizure of a 6 kg Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) hidden in a secret compartment in the trunk of their car.<sup>14</sup>

**November 7, 2018**  
**Zirakpur, Mohali District, Punjab State, India**

FurEver Friends, an NGO dedicated to the rescue of abused animals, collected a king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) and a sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) belonging to a snake charmer. A sand boa can cost up to 2.5 million Indian rupees, or nearly 35,000 US\$; the royal cobra is mostly exhibited by the charmers.<sup>15</sup>

**November 11, 2018**  
**Cochin International Airport, State of Kerala, India**

Seizure of a common krait snake (*Bungarus caeruleus*), one of India's most poisonous snake species, from a passenger's carry-on baggage. The passenger was going to Abu Dhabi on an Air India flight.<sup>16</sup>



**November 23, 2018**  
**Farakka, Murshidabad District, State of West Bengal, India**

Isha Seikh was arrested with a flying snake (genus *Chrysopelea*), a rare and highly sought-after species on the pet market. According to the Times of India, the specimen is worth 9 million Indian rupees, or 1.2 million US\$. The genus *Chrysopelea* includes 5 species that live in the canopy of tropical forests in southern India and Southeast Asia. The flying snake is an ace at aerodynamics. When it throws itself into the air, it flattens itself and, through muscular contractions and undulations, it can control its glide. It soars from tree to tree in the pursuit of its favorite prey: birds, lizards, frogs, bats and rodents. Adults are between 0.6 and 1.2 meters long, depending on the species.<sup>17</sup>



*Chrysopelea ornata ornatissima*

**December 9, 2018**

**Mumbai, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, Maharashtra State, India**

This snake has many virtues. He is not poisonous, he finds hidden treasures, he makes rain fall and secretes 2 valuable substances from his 2 would be brains which are considered either aphrodisiacs or cure rare diseases. Two miracle bluffers were looking to sell a red sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) in Mumbai. Their starting price was 10 million rupees. After a week of negotiations, they were about to sell it for 5 million rupees or 71,000 US\$ in the autorichshaw parking lot of the Sidewalk hotel in the Dahisar district.<sup>18</sup>



**December 11, 2018**

**Chikhaldara, Amravati District, Maharashtra State, India**

The forest rangers of the Melghat Tiger Reserve had received a tip : 2 men aboard a Mahindra Scorpio four-wheeler were to arrive in the mountain station with a living brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). The rangers spotted the vehicle in the parking lot of a nursing home and waited for Sheikh Imran, Sheikh Iqbal and Tanveer Khan Sharif Khan to start heading towards the city of Paratwada to intercept them. They were remanded in custody and their SUV was seized.<sup>19</sup>

**GANG**

**December 22, 2018**

**Jaipur, Jaipur District, Rajasthan State, India**

The criminal police and a team of forest rangers arrested a gang of 6 traffickers, including a woman, and a buyer. Shiekh Mohammad, Muktiyar, Saif, Banwari Nath, Rameez and Sapna were in town to sell a sand boa (*Eryx spp.*, Appendix II) to a certain Ejaz. They asked for 9 million rupees (128,850 US\$). Supposed to bring wealth, the reptile led them to be charged with a violation of the Wildlife Protection Act. It was left in the care of the Jaipur Zoo.<sup>20</sup>

**January 2, 2019**

**Himatnagar, Sabarkantha District, State of Gujarat, India**

Seizure of 2 live Indian spectacled cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) and one dead Russell's viper (*Daboia russelii*, Appendix III). Four arrests for trafficking in venom and endangered species.<sup>21</sup>

**January 7, 2019**

**Chowdariguda, District of Ranga Reddy, State of Telangana, India**



The seizure of a python (*Python spp.*, Appendix I or II) for sale on Facebook or WhatsApp for 24,000 rupees (342 US\$) led to 2 arrests and seizure a dendrelaphis (*Dendrelaphis* genus). To bait buyers and to be noticed in the pet market, accomplices posed with the snakes around their necks.<sup>22</sup>



*Dendrelaphis formosus*

**January 10, 2019**

**Moshi, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Arrest of Hemant Pawar (21 years old) and Akash Waghmare (22 years old) for attempting to sell a sand boa (*Eryx spp.*, Appendix II). They were looking to sell it for about 7,140 US\$. After a bargain with buyers who were actually undercover police officers, they agreed to sell it for about 5,710 US\$. The boa has been entrusted to Rajiv Gandhi Zoo.<sup>23</sup>

**January 15, 2019**

**Wardha, Wardha District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Arrest of Ashish Salodkar (23 years old), Akash Dhanvij (27 years old), Nitesh Chahange (25 years old), and Govind Jadhav (22 years old) for attempting to sell an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). Their starting price was about 20,000 US\$.<sup>24</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**October 25, 2018**

**Thuan Hoa, Vi Xuyen District, Hà Giang Province, Viet Nam**

Two cross-linked pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) of 4.8 and 11 kg will be put back in their natural habitat. They were held in a cage in the back of a restaurant. A tip received on the Education for Nature - Vietnam hotline mobilized the district's Forest Protection Department.<sup>25</sup>



**December 26, 2018**

**Go Dau District, Tay Ninh Province, Viet Nam**

A python (*Python* spp., Appendix II) seized from an individual following a report on the ENV hotline was returned to its natural habitat. The province's Forest Protection Department was in charge of the operations.<sup>26</sup>

**January 30, 2019**

**Hon Ba Nature Reserve, Khanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam**

This Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) was going to be cooked into medicinal potions. Nha Trang's forestry agents rescued it with the help of ENV. He was released into the wild.<sup>27</sup>

**EUROPE**

**GERMANY**

**December 24, 2018**

**Berlin-Schönefeld International Airport, Brandenburg State, Germany**

Christmas present. A 40 cm long living boa (family Boidae, Appendix I or II) was seized from the pants of a traveller leaving for Israel on Christmas Eve.<sup>28</sup>

**SPAIN**

**November 21, 2018**

**Port of Algeciras, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**

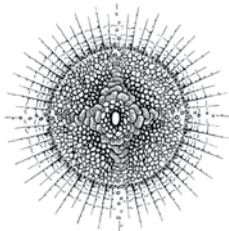
In the middle of the night, a Senegalese disembarked from the car ferry bus from Tangier with a royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and an African rock python (*Python sebae*, Appendix II) in his suitcase. The 2 snakes were located using the Guardia Civil's scanner control screen.<sup>29</sup>

**NETHERLANDS**

**End of 2018**

**Netherlands**

Discovery by Dutch customs of small boas (Boidae, Appendix I or II) hidden among toys.<sup>30</sup>



## Sauria



Tokay gecko for sale on the Internet

**AMERICA**

**MEXICO**

**End of October 2018**

**Mexico City, Mexico**

Seizure of 36 saurians of the genus *Iguana* (Appendix II) and spiny lizards of the genus *Sceloporus*, found in plastic boxes on a parcel delivery platform in Mexico City. They were destined for the United States with transit through the State of Tamaulipas.<sup>1</sup>

**November 11, 2018**

**Lerdo, Durango State, Mexico**

Discovery of a beaded lizard (*Heloderma horridum*, Appendix II) 60 cm long and 2 kg in a house. The beaded lizard is poisonous. As the specimen is equipped with an identification chip, searches have been launched to find its owner. He is suspected of negligence in the safe custody of the reptile.<sup>2</sup>

**January 22, 2019**

**Tecomán, State of Colima, Mexico**

Release of 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) from the hands of poachers.<sup>3</sup>

**ASIA**

**INDIA**

**October 29, 2018**

**Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

These 3 monitors (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) were lucky. They were seized alive and the 54-year-old poacher who had captured them in the Kandigai Forest Reserve was arrested. Each specimen is currently selling for 5000 rupees (68 US\$), and prices are rising. Their blood and meat are in high demand.<sup>4</sup>

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

Mid-November 2018

Jaipur District, Rajasthan State, India

Arrest of Roshan Saini, a former politician belonging to the Bharatiya Janata Party, "Indian People's Party", a right-wing Hindu nationalist party, and his son Rohit Saini for illegal sale of hemipenes from monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) (see "On the Trail" n°17 pp. 24 and 25). These reproductive organs resemble 2 joined hands, as in prayer, and are sometimes considered sacred objects. The 2 men sold them to astrologers or people who practiced black magic. Parts of jackals (genus *Canis*) and turtle's shells were also seized.<sup>5</sup>

November 23, 2018

Murshidabad, West Bengal State, India

Arrest of Mohammed Isa (28 years old) for smuggling a tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*) from Bangladesh. Isa intended to deliver the reptile to a buyer in Jharkand, himself in contact with a Chinese customer.<sup>6</sup>



January 7, 2019

Trichy, District of Tiruchirappalli, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of a 70 cm long monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). Two arrests.<sup>7</sup>

January 14, 2019

Pundibari, District of Cooch Behar, State of West Bengal, India

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion seized a Tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*) originating from Bhutan. The smuggler was handed over to the district forest officers.<sup>8</sup>

## EUROPE

GERMANY



October 25, 2018

Mainz, Rhineland-Palatinate State, Germany

Search for illegal work at the home of a 34-year-old male. Customs seize an iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II).<sup>9</sup>

## NETHERLANDS

Early November 2018

Netherlands

Seizure of eggs and 1.7 kg of green iguana meat (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) from Curacao.<sup>10</sup>

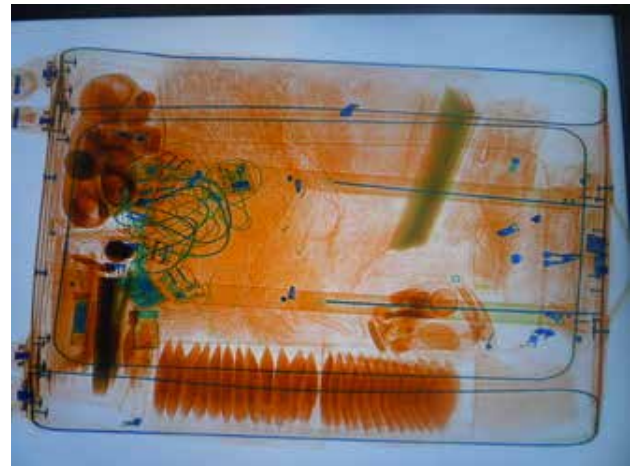
## OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

November 8, 2018

Perth International Airport, State of Western Australia, Australia

Seizure of 6 bobtail skinks (*Tiliqua rugosa*) wrapped in paper towels and hidden inside a bag for 8 days, without food and practically without water. Their holder, a 45-year-old Japanese man, was arrested as he was about to fly to Hong Kong. Bobtail skink, endemic to Australia, sells for up to 7,100 US\$ on the international black market.<sup>11</sup>



## Crocodylians

### AFRICA

#### ZAMBIA

**October 18, 2018**

**Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, Zambia**

James Makungu (60 years old), Lawrence Chipashya (48 years old), Friday Musonda (21 years old) and Ponda Sichinga (21 years old) were sentenced to 5 years in prison with hard labour for unlawfully keeping a crocodile skin (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II).<sup>1</sup>



### AMERICA

#### BRAZIL

**October 9, 2018**

**Mogi Guaçu, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Two months ago, 4 spectacled caimans (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II) from the Amazon were found in his home. He was fined a total of 4,800 real (1,290 US\$). The man sold animals on social media.<sup>2</sup>



#### MEXICO

**Mid-November 2018**

**Tepetzotlán, State of Mexico, Mexico**

Opening of a parcel spotted by the canine brigade on a delivery service platform. Discovery of the skin of a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II).<sup>3</sup>

**November 22, 2018**

**Salamanca, State of Guanajuato, Mexico**

Discovery of a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II) discarded in a municipal office. Less than a year old and about 40 cm tall, the small crocodile was in good health.<sup>4</sup>

### EUROPE

#### GERMANY

**October 19, 2018**

**Frankfurt am Main, State of Hesse, Germany**

Seizure of a crocodile skin wallet (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) from a postal parcel originating in the United States. CITES permit missing.<sup>5</sup>

#### SPAIN

**End of November 2018**

**Adeje, Province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain**

A stuffed West African dwarf crocodile *Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I) was found on a public road by the Guardia Civil patrol. This is the second on the same street in a few weeks!<sup>6</sup>

## Various Reptile Species

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

**November 23, 2018**

**Qacha's Nek border crossing, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Border with Lesotho.**

Discovery of a 2 m long boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a 1.5 m long Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II) during a roadblock. The driver (39 years old) and his 2 passengers (27 and 39 years old) were arrested. The 3 men were from Limpopo and were apparently heading for the Eastern Cape province, more than 1,000 km to the south.<sup>1</sup>

### AMERICA

#### COLOMBIA

**Mid-January 2019**

**Bogotá, Cundinamarca department, Colombia**

Seizure onboard a car of 58 Colombians slider turtles (*Trachemys callirostris*), 10 wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), and one boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) packed in nets. One interpellation.<sup>2</sup>



#### MEXICO

**December 14, 2018**

**Morelia, State of Michoacán, Mexico**

Seizure of a juvenile Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I), 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and a spiny softshell turtle (*Apalone spinifera*, Appendix III, USA) that were being offered for sale by a street vendor.<sup>3</sup>

## EL SALVADOR

Early December 2018

### San Salvador, Department of San Salvador, El Salvador

Seizure by the Policía Nacional Civil of 8 African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), a veiled chameleon (*Chamaeleo calypttratus*, Appendix II) and 5 bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*) in the store "Animales Exóticos Paul". The African turtles are in poor health. The shells are soft due to lack of natural light; their future is uncertain.<sup>4</sup> African spurred tortoises, see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 120, n°7 p. 13, n°8 p. 95, n°14 p. 108, n°16 p. 20, p. 95, p. 100, n°18 p. 19, p. 27, n°19 p. 21, p. 30, n°20 p. 124, n°21 p. 21, n°22 p. 22.

ASIA

## INDIA

October 1, 2018

### Nashik, Maharashtra State, India

Joint operation of the NGOs People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Wildlife Welfare Association (WWA) and the city police. Two traffickers - Faiz Kokni and Saurabh Gholait - were arrested in possession of 8 very young crocodiles (*Crocodylia* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 Hamilton's terrapins (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I). The crocodiles were undernourished and had to receive veterinary care before they could be returned to the Forest Department.<sup>5</sup>



October 8, 2018

### Saparde, Thane District, Maharashtra State, India

A team of 13 forest rangers led by a senior officer, Kalpana Waghare, carried out a raid in the village after a video showing protected species was broadcast. They arrested Aniket Phadekar, Jitendra Pirani and a 17-year-old accomplice in possession of 4 sand boas (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II), an Indian flapshell turtle (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) and 9 turtle eggs. The 2 adults were incarcerated and the juvenile placed in a correctional facility before their trial. The reptiles were entrusted to the NGO RAWW (Resqink Association for Wildlife Welfare), which found them stressed and dehydrated. On examination, the turtle was found to carry 3 eggs. After 2 weeks of care, the 0.75 to 1.10 m long boas and the turtle were released into their natural habitats.<sup>6</sup>

October 17, 2018

### Raichak, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal State, India

Six estuarine sea snakes (*Hydrophis* spp.) and 2 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) were exposed to the feet of a deity before an altar erected for a Puja ceremony. The turtles time was short: their sacrifice was programmed. Fortunately, a member of the NGO Human and Environment Alliance League (HEAL) was passing through there. He informed the Forestry Department, which convinced the organizers to hand over their reptiles. No one was arrested, but the president and secretary of the religious circle had to sign a document in which they acknowledged that the capture and display of wildlife is illegal and that they had unintentionally committed a crime. They also had to apologize publicly and urge the crowd not to capture or abuse wildlife.<sup>7</sup>

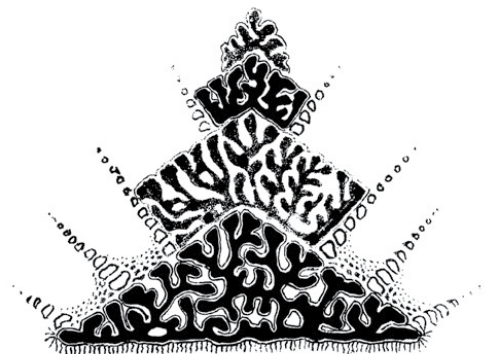
EUROPE

## NETHERLANDS

January 2019

### Netherlands

Seizure of 3 pairs of boots, one pair made of tegus leather (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II) and the other 2 made of python skin (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) in the belongings of an American passenger.<sup>8</sup>



# Terrestrial Molluscs

EUROPE

## ITALY

**End of October 2018**  
**Naples International Airport, Campania Region, Italy**



Seizure of 6 shells of Cuban land snail (*Polymita picta*, Appendix I) from a traveler coming from Cuba. *Polymita sulfurosa*, *Polymita venusta* and *Polymita muscarum* are on the verge of extinction and the other 3 families of the same genus are on the same path. These tree snails are said to have the most beautiful shells in the gastropod class.

Since 1970, local extinctions have been reported in the provinces of Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo. The looting of polymites began at the beginning of the 20th century. Millions of shells were exported to Canada and the United States to make necklaces. Local hand-crafted production was developed under the Castro regime to meet the demand of international tourists. They were then threatened by nickel mines and the sugar industry, gypsum quarries, coastal forest fires, and fragmentation of residual habitats by hotels and private airports.

Even today, shells can still be found for sale on the Internet (eBay.com, cubacollectibles.com) at prices ranging from 5 to 45 US\$. The smuggler could be 6,000 to 30,000 € fined.<sup>1</sup>

cubacollectibles.com

# Amphibians

AMERICA

## BOLIVIA

**January 17, 2019**  
**K'ayra, Bolivia**

The Sehuencas water frog (*Telmatobius yuracare*) is said to be on the verge of extinction. A team composed of Global Wildlife Conservation and the Alcide d'Orbigny Natural History Museum, which presents itself as the last chance mission, has been tracking down male and female specimens for several years to breed and, they say, save the species. The tone is set to post-Shakespearean humor. The amphibians, 55mm and 62mm long, are referred to as "Romeo and Juliet". "We hope it will be love at first sight". Speed dating takes place at the K'ayra Herpetological Research Center. The Sehuencas water frog lives at the bottom of streams and rivers at an altitude of 2-3000m.<sup>1</sup>

## COLOMBIA

**Early November 2018**  
**El Dorado International Airport, Bogota, Colombia**



Seizure of 216 venomous frogs hidden in 194 film canisters that were in turn camouflaged among clothes in a backpack abandoned in the airport restroom. The frogs were identified as belonging to various dendrobates species: harlequin poison from (*Oophaga histrionica*, Appendix II), little devil poison from (*Oophaga sylvatica*, Appendix II) and Lehmann's poison frog (*Oophaga lehmanni*, Appendix II). According to the authorities, they were destined for Germany.<sup>2</sup>



ASIA

CHINA

October 19, 2018

Zeyazhen, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of 38 giant spiny frogs (*Quasipaa spinose*) that had been caught by Hwang, 34 years old. The frogs are endemic in China, where they breed in rocky streams, as well as in the mountains. They lay their eggs in the water, under rocks. They have been sought after as a specialty in Asia since the 1930, but are also threatened by loss of habitat.<sup>3</sup>



Arachnids

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

Early October 2018

El Dorado International Airport, Bogota, Colombia

Hidden in vials inside of cereal boxes, 23 tarantulas (genera *Xenesthis* and *Pamphobeteus*) were to be conveyed to Seoul by Yan Jin Hyung, a Korean national.<sup>1</sup>



EUROPE

FRANCE

October 2018

Lons-le-Saunier, Jura Department, France

A man and his ex-wife were found guilty of using and transporting a protected species. The man was sentenced to a fine of 2000 € and the woman to 500 €. According to the ONCFS (Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune sauvage), the man caught nearly 4000 European frogs (*Rana temporaria*) in 2017, although his license only authorized him to catch 1000 specimens. In total, according to his ex-wife, the man supposedly made 75,000 € in profits over a 10-year period, representing the sale of over 130,000 frogs.<sup>4</sup>



## Birds



### AFRICA

#### TCHAD

**Early January 2019**

**Fitri department, Batha region, Chad**

Three poachers have been arrested. They carried carcasses of African ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I). Ostriches are sought after for their feathers, flesh, and oil in cosmetics and parapharmaceuticals. (cf. On the Trail n°8 p. 195).<sup>1</sup>

### AMERICA

#### ARGENTINA

**November 15, 2018**

**Near General José de San Martín, Chaco Province, Argentina**

Seizure of 95 parrot chicks (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) in 3 cardboard boxes on the back of a motorcycle. Interpellation of the driver and the 2 passengers aged 23, 27 and 28 years old.<sup>2</sup>



**End of December 2018**

**Mendoza Province, Argentina**

52 black goldfinches (*Spinus atratus*) were seized in a house in Luján de Cuyo and released in the highlands.<sup>3</sup>



**Mid-January 2019**

**Avellaneda, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina**

Rescue of a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) escaped from a private property. The bird is not ringed.<sup>4</sup>



**Late January 2019**

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Seizure of 560 blue-fronted parrots (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) from a truck carrying pumpkins.<sup>5</sup>



#### BOLIVIA

**Early December 2018**

**Oruro, Oruro Department, Bolivia**

Confiscation of a green-winged macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) that lived alone in terrible conditions.<sup>6</sup>

## BRAZIL

The 1967 law for the protection of wildlife states that wildlife is national property and forbids the trade of wild animals or their parts. 52 years later, it is still not put in practice. The first victims are birds. They are captured for their singing and imitating qualities and in the name of an age-old tradition. In Brazil, a caged bird is part of the decoration. 50 to 100,000 birds are seized each year upon urban patrols, roadside checks, or police raids. Singing birds and parrots captured in savannas and forests, are destined to become pet clowns or singing show birds, if they survive the brutalities to which they are victims.

The seizures are commendable and laughable. In a recent statistic (2013), IBAMA estimated that 38 million birds are taken from their natural habitats each year. Amazon chicks are bought near Novo Horizonte do Sul for 10 to 20 US\$ and resold in São Paulo for 150 to 200 US\$, campo troupials are bought for less than 0.50 US\$ in the Santo Estêvão markets and resold for 10 US\$ 1,500 km away in Rio de Janeiro, green-winged saltators are bought for 10 US\$ in Jaíba in Minas Gerais and resold for 100 US\$ 1,000 km away in Salvador. Between suppliers, transporters, intermediates, sellers, cage makers, veterinarians, food producers, and comfort accessory producers, the sector provides income to 200 to 300,000 people.



*Amazona aestiva*  
Turquoise-fronted amazon



*Zenaida auriculata*  
Eared dove



*Turdus rufiventris*  
Rufous-bellied thrush



*Oryzoborus angolensis*  
Chestnut-bellied seed finch



*Sporophila caerulescens*  
Double-collared seedeater



*Spinus magellanicus*  
Hooded siskin



*Sicalis flaveola*  
Saffron finch



*Icterus jamacaii*  
Campo Troupial



*Saltator similis*  
Green-winged saltator



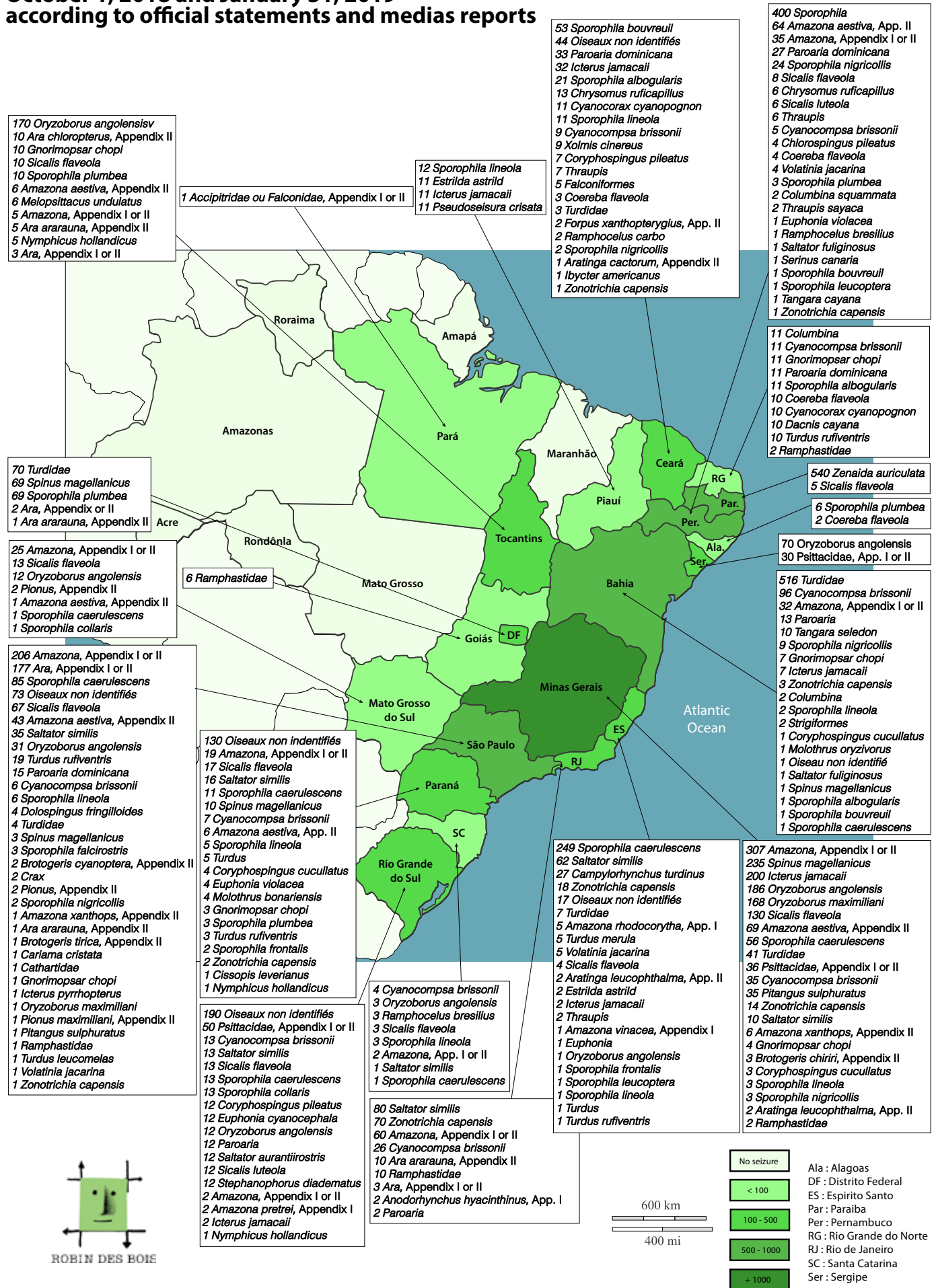
*Cyanocopsa brissonii*  
Ultramarine grosbeak



*Lorius lory*  
Black-capped lory



# 6583 birds seized in Brazil between October 1, 2018 and January 31, 2019 according to official statements and medias reports



## CHILE

**End of November 2018**

**Colchane, Tarapacá Region, Chile. Border with Bolivia.**

Attempt to smuggle a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a red-and-green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) and 4 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) by a passenger on a bus from Cochabamba to Iquique. Quarantine of the 6 specimens.<sup>7</sup>



## COLOMBIA

**Early October 2018**

**Cúcuta, Norte de Santander Department, Colombia**

Following a roadside check, 80 endangered birds including saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and spectacled parrotlets (*Forpus conspicillatus*, Appendix II) were seized. The presumed destination was Bogota, the capital city.<sup>8</sup>



**Mid-October 2018**  
**Bogotá, Colombia**



Seizure by the environmental police of 24 birds in very poor condition, including parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), red-vented parrots (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II), parakeets (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), cardinals (genus *Cardinalis*), yellow-

backed orioles (*Icterus chrysater*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), tropical mockingbirds (*Mimus gilvus*), black-chested jays (*Cyanocorax affinis*), green jays (*Cyanocorax yncas*), great kiskadees (*Pitangus sulphuratus*). Questioning of a woman who is believed to be part of a network operating in the southwestern part of the capital. The birds are entrusted to the Institute for Animal Protection (IPA). Most of them would have been in captivity for 3 or 4 years. They suffer from localized alopecia.<sup>9</sup>



**January 28, 2019**

**Cerrito, Santander Department, Colombia**

Two Andean condors (*Vultur gryphus*, Appendix I) were poisoned. The "paramos", which are wetlands of the Cordillera where the great Andean rivers originate at an altitude of 3-4000m, are not made for livestock; however, they are invaded by herds of sheep and cows that overtrample the soil and increase erosion. Condors are no longer welcome in paramos, since they are accused of attacking newborns in domestic livestock. They mainly look out for carrion and also for fetuses and stillborn. The truth is, when condors see an inanimate animal on land, they go down, sting it once or twice and, if there's no reaction, they eat it. The Cerrito sector is home to about 30 of the 150 condors in Colombia's skies; in fact, the condor is the emblem of the Colombian flag. The 2 poisoned condors have been in the hands of veterinarians and in cages for 2 months.<sup>10</sup>



## ECUADOR

**Mid-November 2018**

### **El Alto, Canton of Puyango, Loja Province, Ecuador**

Following a roadside check, 46 grey-cheeked parakeets (*Brotogeris pyrrhoptera*, Appendix II) and 3 red-masked conures (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II) were seized. The presumed destination was Peru. The birds were taken to Loya Zoo before being released if possible. Two arrests.<sup>11</sup>

**November 17, 2018**

### **Otavalo, Imbabura Province, Ecuador**

Sentence of one year in prison for holding and offering for sale 17 celestial parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II).<sup>12</sup>



**Mid-January 2019**

### **Orellana Province, Ecuador**



© Hector Silva Reyna

Seizure of an ornate hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*, Appendix II) with its wings cut off. He has been entrusted to the wildlife management center of the Nueva Loja tourist park. In the wild, he lives in tropical forests. He is not often observed in Ecuador.<sup>13</sup>

**January 23 and 24, 2019**

### **Latacunga, Cotopaxi Province, Ecuador**

Rescue of 2 Andean condors (*Vultur gryphus*, Appendix I) victims of poisoning and placed under assisted breathing and perfusion. Rounds will be conducted to ensure that other birds and animals are not affected. A complaint was filed by the Ministry of Environment. Six brigades are scouring the area to try to find the sources of this poisoning.<sup>14</sup>



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## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**December 8, 2018**

### **John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York State, United States of America**

Seized from the luggage of a passenger arriving from Georgetown, Guyana, 70 finches of the family Fringillidae stuffed into 70 hair curlers. See "On the Trail" n°20 p.43. The birds have been quarantined.<sup>15</sup>



© U.S. Customs and Border Protection



**January 10, 2019**

### **Tyler, State of Texas, United States of America**

Sentencing of Jorge Fernando Mercado to 175 days in prison for the illegal detention and sale of an eastern screech owl (*Otus asio*, Appendix II). The bird put up for sale for 200 US\$ was finally found, rehabilitated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and released into the wild. Mercado, a Mexican citizen without a residence permit in the United States, will be sent back to his country after his prison sentence.<sup>16</sup>



© Gregory «Stobird» Smith

## MEXICO

**October 7, 2018**

### **Cacaxtla Plateau Wildlife Refuge, Sinaloa State, Mexico**

Release into appropriate habitat of 2 orange-fronted parakeets (*Eupsittula canicularis*, Appendix II) and 9 white-fronted parrots (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II) that were seized in May 2017.<sup>17</sup>

**October 10, 2018**

### **State of Querétaro, Mexico**

Seizure of a keel-billed toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II). Precautionary measures have been taken with regard to the released suspect to ensure that she responds to the summons to appear before the courts.<sup>18</sup>

**October 31, 2018**

### **Mexico City, Mexico**

Seizure in a private house, after a tip off, of 3 white-fronted amazons (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), 2 red-lored amazons (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II), 4 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), 3 blue-rumped parrotlets (*Forpus cyanopygius*, Appendix II), a painted bunting (*Passerina ciris*), 4 northern mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*), a starling (genus *Sturnus*), 2 cardinals (genus *Cardinalis*), a bluebird (genus *Sialis*), a northern band-tailed pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*), a grey catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*), 2 Townsend's solitaires (*Myadestes townsendi*) and a bronzed cowherd (*Molothrus aeneus*). The person occupying the premises fled during the search.<sup>19</sup>

**November 1, 2018**

### **Mexico City, Mexico**

Seizure from an private home of a red-lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II), a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and a sulphur-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*, Appendix II).<sup>20</sup>

**November 14, 2018**

### **Huimanguillo, Tabasco State, Mexico**

Seizure following a roadside check of 2 red-lored amazons (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II). Until further notice, they have been entrusted to the UMA (Unidad de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre) "Parque Museo La Venta".<sup>21</sup>

**December 5, 2018**

### **La Venta, Tabasco State, Mexico**

Seizure of a red-lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II) from a car on the Cárdenas-Coatzacoalcos road.<sup>22</sup>



**January 18, 2019**

### **Arriaga, State of Chiapas, Mexico**

Two roadside checks resulted in the seizure of nearly 100 birds. In the first intervention, 78 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), a white-fronted parrot (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), a yellow-naped parrot (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I), and 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) were hidden in plastic bags behind the door trim of a Chevrolet heading towards Tuxtla Gutiérrez. The animals were all dehydrated and malnourished. The second intervention resulted in the seizure of 18 Pacific parakeets (*Aratinga strenua*, Appendix II) and one white-fronted parrot (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), all with their wings cut off. All birds have been entrusted to the Miguel Alvarez del Toro Zoo, in the city of Tuxtla Gutiérrez.<sup>23</sup>

**January 28, 2019**

### **Escuinapa, State of Sinaloa, Mexico**

Seizure of 28 military macaws (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I) during a roadside check, including 5 already dead. The birds were on a bus, hidden by 4 in boxes. Feathers had been cut off. The bus driver was arrested.<sup>24</sup>

## PARAGUAY

**October 21, 2018**

### **San Lorenzo, Central Department, Paraguay. Border with Argentina.**

Seizure of 2 yellow-chevroned parakeets (*Brotogeris chiriri*, Appendix II), 2 nanday conures (*Nandayus nenday*, Appendix II) and 3 white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II).<sup>25</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

### **Asunción, Paraguay**

Seizure of 2 hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I, see "On the Trail" n°13 p. 34) from Rubén Moisés Cantero who was trying to sell them at a market in the centre of the capital. The potential buyers were as a matter of fact officials of the Ministry of Environment. Cantero faces up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to 16 million guarani, or 2,680 US\$.<sup>26</sup>

**Mid-November 2018**

### **Luque, Central Department, Paraguay**

Seizure of 4 white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II), a Nanday conure (*Nandayus nenday*, Appendix II) and a scaly-headed parrot (*Pionus maximiliani*, Appendix II) on the market following

a raid by the MADES (Ministerio del Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible). The seller fled. The birds were transferred to Asuncion Zoo for an assessment of their mobility and health status in preparation for release. MADES intends to repeat this type of intervention.<sup>27</sup>



**December 14, 2018**

**Encarnación, Department of Itapúa, Paraguay.  
Border with Argentina.**

Seizure of 2 toco toucans (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II) in a box. They were for sale in the street. After their transfer to the Atinguy de Ayolas shelter, the veterinarian diagnosed very high agitation and stress levels due to the heat and curiosity of passers-by. The seller received a warning but was not arrested. He was accompanied by a child.<sup>28</sup>

**Mid-January 2019**

**Talara and Sullana, Piura region, Peru**

Seizure on a market and private property of 8 celestial parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II), 2 scrub blackbirds (*Dives warczewiczii*), a saffron finch (*Sicalis flaveola*), and a long-tailed mockingbird (*Mimus longicaudatus*).<sup>29</sup>

**ASIA**

**BANGLADESH**

**November 2018**

**Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat Districts, Rangpur Division, Bangladesh**

It's winter. The time for migratory birds poaching has come to the marshes. There is unrest in the districts, much to the displeasure of bird protectors. Local species are also targeted. Dove eggs, egrets and parrots abound on the markets, as do testimonies.



"Every day I catch 6 to 7 doves by trapping and sell each bird at Tk 300 to Tk 400 (3.5 – 4.7 US\$) to the locals. Azahar Ali, 47, an egret hunter at Kulaghat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said he goes to the local wetland for hunting the birds that move around to take small fishes. "I can hunt four to 6 egrets every day and sell each at Tk 500 to Tk 700 (6 – 8 US\$)

"We sell egret and other birds openly on the street but we never face any difficulty from law enforcers"; "In winter season, water in the river comes down to knee-deep level at many places and there we use big nets to catch entire flocks of birds." Several thousand people in the region make a living from this seasonal poaching. In addition to glue, nets, traps and rifles, a local trick works wonders. A heron or crane is placed at the edge of the marshes in a cage camouflaged with bamboos and leaves. One of their legs is connected to a wire at the end of which, a few meters away, a poacher is hidden. From time to time he pulls the wire, the wader stumbles, flaps his wings and scares the other birds away in the thickets previously covered with a net. The travelling puppeteers catch 20 to 30 birds a day. At the local police station, it is said that bird poaching is a crime. "Bird hunting is a punishable offence and if we are informed, we'll take prompt action against the poachers."<sup>30</sup>

**November 13, 2018**

**Sylhet, Sylhet Division, Bangladesh**

Raid carried out by the RAB (Rapid Action Battalion), the local administration and by the game wardens in the Pach Bhai restaurant famous for its quality service and good cuisine, and infamous for serving wild bird stew. Seizure, in the state of cooked dish or frozen, of over one hundred Andaman teals (*Anas albogularis*), lesser whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna javanica*) and great egrets (*Ardea alba*).<sup>31</sup>

**January 20, 2019**

**Tongi, Gazipur District, Bangladesh**

Seizure of 469 birds of various species from a bazaar at Tongi Bridge. Ten died shortly after. The others were released. A stallholder court specializing in wildlife smuggling and other scams sentenced the 10 illegal sellers to prison terms ranging from one to 6 months. In the same raid, the RAB (Rapid Action Battalion) seized 42 tons of toxic chicken feed made from tannery waste. Both sellers were sentenced to 2 years in prison.<sup>32</sup>



**CHINA**

**OPERATION "0530"**

**Mid-October 2018**

**Fuzhou and Xiamen, Province of Fujian, Guangzhou, Province of Guangdong, China**

Seizure of 247 parrots and parakeets (order Psittaciformes) including coconut lorikeets (*Trichoglossus haematodus*, Appendix II) endemic to eastern Australia, 61 munias or silverbills (genus *Lonchura*) and 55 common pigeons (*Columba livia domestica*). Eight arrests. Dismantling of a network operating in Xiamen, Fuzhou and Guangzhou. It would be responsible for the capture of 14,000 songbirds. Main weapon: nets. Estimated revenue: 20 million Yuan (2.9 million US\$ i.e. 207 US\$/individual).<sup>33</sup>



*Trichoglossus haematodus*

**October 20, 2018**

**Zhangfengzhen, Province of Yunnan, China**

Arrest of a suspect involved in smuggling 146 live Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) seized on April 8, 2018 at the Kunming-Changshui International Airport. Estimated value according to the Chinese media: 1.46 million Yuan (232,000 US\$ i.e. 1590 US\$/individual). Police are looking for more accomplices.<sup>34</sup>

**November 11, 2018**

**Songyuan, Province of Jilin, China**

Poaching by means of poisoning of Oriental white storks (*Ciconia boyciana*, Appendix I) in the wetlands of the Bijadian River. One arrest. Strong anger among “netizens”. Storks became very rare by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because of hunting, pesticides and many disruptions of their habitat and migration stopover sites. The gang responsible for the poaching would travel through the marshes in off-road vehicles. The species is considered extinct in North Korea, South Korea and Mongolia. The last visible populations survive in Far Eastern Russia as well as in the Chinese province of Hubei.<sup>35</sup>



**December 18, 2018**

**Taizhou, Province of Zhejiang, China**

Seizure in freezers of 413 birds, all protected by law including yellow breasted buntings (*Emberiza aureola*). The 50-year-old woman would poison the birds with grains soaked in pesticides and would then sell them to restaurants regardless of any consideration for the consumer's health. The case was uncovered when she was arrested by a patrol at the edge of the forest. She had 40 dead birds in a crate in the back of her moped.<sup>36</sup>



**January 22, 2019**

**Lok Ma Chau Control Point, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China. Border along mainland China.**

Seizure under the floors of the bus of 25 kg of swallow nests, or at least 1,780 nests. Value equal to 109,000 US\$. Arrest of the driver.<sup>37</sup>



**January 24, 2019**

**Zhejiang Province, China**

According to the Deputy Director of the Natural History Museum, “the rarest bird in the world,” the *Thalasseus bernsteini*, is in the process of being reconstituted after almost becoming extinct. The female incubates only one egg per year and the odds of it hatching are reduced by natural predators such as snakes and climatic predators such as typhoons. From 20 in 2004, the population is now estimated at just over 100. *Thalasseus bernsteini* resides on the east coast of China in summer and in Southeast Asia in winter.<sup>38</sup>



## INDIA

**October 9, 2018**

### **Shahjahanpur, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Arrest of 3 traffickers around midnight and seizure of more than 2,000 parakeets of several species (*Psittacula* spp., Appendix II). The thugs had captured them in Nepal and in the Dudhwa and Pilibhit tiger reserves. They were sent to prison.<sup>39</sup>

**20-102018 JP**

**October 17, 2018**

### **Hyderabad, Telangana State, India**

An Indian roller (*Coracias benghalensis*) was at risk during the religious ceremonies of Dasara. It was locked in a cage inside a "pandal" - a temporary altar -, supposed to be auspicious for those who saw him. But the bird was dehydrated and malnourished. Someone was moved to action by the sight of him and notified the Forest and Wildlife Crime Enforcement Unit. The case was delicate. Officials accompanied by the police, the anti-poaching brigade and members of the Friends of Snakes Society came to save the bird. No legal action has been taken against the clergymen. After some care, the Indian roller could be released into a scrub forest.<sup>40</sup>



**End of October 2018**

### **Mysore, Karnataka State, India**

An Indian eagle-owl (*Bubo bengalensis*, Appendix II) escaped the greed of gullible businessmen. Means of transport of the goddess Lakshmi, the bird of prey is reputed to bring wealth... and keep away agents from the tax authorities. Ravishkumar and Sridhar were arrested before they sold him to be beheaded and buried in front of a luxury property.<sup>41</sup>

**Early November 2018**

### **Khebuching, Tamenglong District, Manipur State, India**

Poaching of an Amur falcon (*Falco amurensis*, Appendix II). In winter, coming down from the North, they come in groups to nest in the region. Rainforest Club volunteers and forestry officers go door-to-door to meet with chiefs and other "influencers" in 20 villages to convince them to speak out for peace for the birds of prey.<sup>42</sup>

**November 18, 2018**

### **Navalur, Kanchipuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Seizure of 18 night herons (*Ardeidae* family), 3 cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*), 2 water cocks (*Gallinix cinerea*), a common coot (*Fulica atra*), 2 black-winged stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*) and an open-billed stork (*Anastomus oscitans*). The 6 poachers said that the birds were intended for their own personal consumption. Witnesses say they would regularly come in the early hours of the day near a water bridge under the pretext of swimming and when the sun rose they shot at the birds. They are armed with an artisanal gun and slingshots. The projectiles are dried mud pellets. Combined fines worth 815 US\$ total.<sup>43</sup>

**November 26, 2018**

### **Lake Chilika, State of Odisha, India**

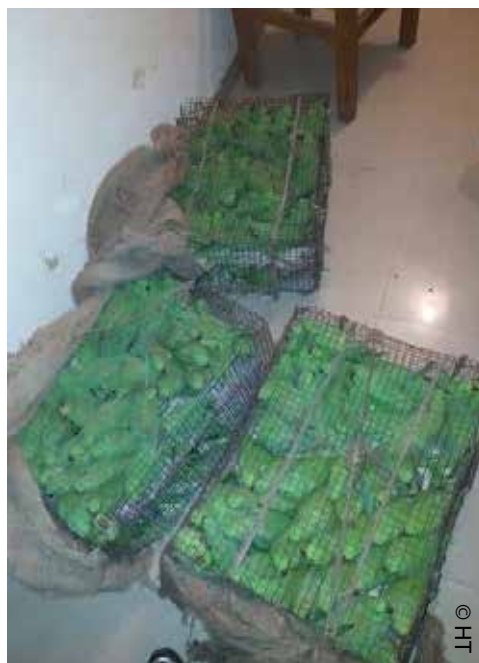
Seizure of fire arms, traps, poison pellets and migrating birds identified only by their weight, 2 kg, and the number of bodies, 30. Small birds then. Twenty security posts were set up around the lake to prevent poaching of the birds coming during the winter.<sup>44</sup>



**November 28, 2018**

### **Lucknow, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Night seizure on the roof of a bus linking Lucknow to Gorakhpur of 497 parakeets (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II). Arrest of the driver and ticket inspector. The cargo was heading to Nepal.<sup>45</sup>



**November 29, 2018**

### **Ayodhya, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Inside a bus, 285 parakeets (family *Psittacidae*) in bags. Meant to be sold in Calcutta and in Patna.<sup>46</sup>

## Early December 2018

### Sedam, Kalaburagi District, Karnataka State, India

6 men were arrested as they were preparing to deliver 2 Indian eagle owls (*Bubo bengalensis*, Appendix II) to a middleman in town. They had been captured in Jamakhandi, Bagalkot district. According to them, their contact wanted to negotiate them from 300,000 to 400,000 rupees each (4,295 to 5,725 US\$) with a politician in Hyderabad who had ordered them. The aim was to sacrifice them to bring bad luck to its competitors in the December 7 legislative elections in Telangana. In some Indian states, owl poaching peaks during religious holidays and elections. Indian Great Horned Owls, spotted owlets (*Athene brama*, Appendix II), mottled-wood owls (*Strix ocellata*, Appendix II), barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), dusky eagle owls (*Bubo coromandus*, Appendix II) and brown fish-owls (*Ketupa zeylonensis*, Appendix II) are the most sought-after. About 80,000 could be sacrificed each year. 2019 is likely to be particularly fatal for these birds of prey because of the elections to the federal parliament - the Lok Sabha - from April to May.<sup>47</sup>



*Athene brama*

© Antaryami



*Ketupa zeylonensis*

© Dr. Vijay Anand Ismail MS MCh



*Bubo coromandus*

© Carmelo López Abad

## December 6, 2018

### Tirumalgiri, Hyderabad District, Telangana State, India

A barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) escaped sacrifice thanks to the intervention of Amrita Reddy, an animal rights advocate who discovered her stressed and thirsty in a cage. Some parts of the city are known for black magic rituals involving owls or crows, which are sometimes found with broken beaks and talons. The number of catches in the area is rising. According to Mr. Karthik - another animal rights activist - the police have been informed on several occasions of the sale of protected birds at the Murgi Chowk Covered Market in the old town of Hyderabad, but does not seem to care about the problem.<sup>48</sup>

## December 10, 2018

### Harike Bird Sanctuary, Ferozepur District, Punjab State, India

Raman, Sarvan and Varinder were caught in the act. They had poisoned 13 coots (*Fulica spp.*) and 6 northern shovelers (*Spatula clypeata*) that had arrived from Siberia and stopped over in the wetlands during their winter migration. Lake Harike and its surrounding marshes are listed in the inventory of the International Ramsar Convention. In foggy weather, forest rangers have a lot to do to counter poaching groups that are spreading in the wetland area.<sup>49</sup>



## December 14, 2018

### Kozhikode District, Kerala State, India

Symbolic demonstration of SAVE (Student's Army for Vivid Environment) which gathers 12,000 students and 500 teachers. 15 minutes without electricity and by candlelight in honour of a lost young pink flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*, Appendix II) wounded by thugs with stones and bottles. The victim was then killed by stray dogs. According to a SAVE spokesperson, the protest is aimed at spreading awareness that birds and animals also have as much right to live in this planet as human beings.<sup>50</sup>

## December 14, 2018

### Chinhat, Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh State, India

Seizure of more than 600 ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*) crammed into several cages, and arrest of Ahmad and Abhishek who were carrying them in their cars. They were on their way to Nepal but had already done business at the bird markets in Lucknow, Patna and Calcutta. Authorities seized the vehicle, a mobile phone and 5,500 rupees (78 US\$). The duo had obtained the birds in Shahjahanpur district from the Baheliya community, who are active hunters and bird trappers.<sup>51</sup>



**December 17, 2018**

**Pokhran, Jaisalmer District, Rajasthan State, India**

The discovery of the carcass of a great Indian bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*, Appendix I) in the army's firing range is very bad news for the protectors of this critically endangered species. A wildlife defender, Radhey Shyam Pemani, discovered it missing its head and legs. According to the initial findings of Deputy Forest Conservator Ashok Meharia, the animal was shot and then eaten by a fox. The canine's prints were found nearby. An inquiry commission has been established. This is the 6th great Indian bustard found dead in 2018. The species is estimated to have only about 200 individuals left, the majority of them in Rajasthan, which established it as a State emblem in 2002. The Godawan - its local name - is one of the largest birds in the world. An adult male weighs about 14 kg and is between 80 cm and 1.20 m high. It lives in arid natural meadows but faces many threats: hunting, egg theft, the modification of its environment by irrigation and new crops (such as castor, chili, sunflower and genetically modified cotton), livestock, roads, industry, power lines... The Godawan is really struggling. A part of its population is located in the Pokhran field firing range, near the former Indian nuclear test site.<sup>52</sup>



**December 22, 2018**

**Eintkhedi, Bhopal District, Madhya Pradesh State, India**

Discovery inside an SUV of a dead peacock (genus *Pavo*) and a shotgun. Flight of a passenger. Police custody of the other 3, 2 of whom, aged 19 and 30, present themselves as students. The third is a minor under 15 years of age. He was released from prison when his father proved his age by producing school certificates and was ordered temporary placement in borstal school.<sup>53</sup>

**December 28, 2018**

**Chilika Lake, Odisha State, India**

The 1,165 km<sup>2</sup> lake is a popular stopover for migratory birds from northern Eurasia, the Caspian Sea region, Siberia, Kazakhstan and Lake Baikal. It is included in the Ramsar Convention and on UNESCO's World Heritage List. This winter about 800,000 birds landed on its waters. They are prey to poachers that 19 game warden camps are trying to intercept. Last night Akhaya Das and Gouranga Behera were arrested. They had already killed 8 gadwalls (*Anas strepera*), 3 little grebes (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) and a common teal (*Anas crecca*) that they intended to sell to nearby hotels and restaurants. The demand for waterfowl to be included in the menu is high in the cities of Bhubaneswar, Balugaon and Berhampur.<sup>54</sup>

**January 5, 2019**

**Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Seizure of 75 Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) under 20 days old on a market stall. Thulasi, a member of the Narikorava clan, accompanied by his assistants Ganesan and Gayathri, were arrested and released on payment of a fine of 420 US\$. The chicks were caught in the forests and sold in pairs for 2,400 rupees or 34 US\$.<sup>55</sup>



**Early January 2019**

**Koluvur, Ramanathapuram district, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Poaching of 4 egrets (family Ardeidae) and one Indian pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*), leading to 4 arrests. The birds were still alive. They were meant to be cooked, but will be released a little later. Slingshots and traps have been seized as well.

In the 30 ha ornithological sanctuary, inaugurated on January 13, 2011 and blessed by mimosa branches, the banks are lined with thorny bushes of banyans and neems; "An ideal site for the nesting of migratory birds," said the authorities at the time.<sup>57</sup>

**January 24, 2019  
Tirumakudalu Narasipura, Mysore District,  
Karnataka State, India**

Rescue of 28 grey francolins (*Francolinus pondicerianus*). They were in cages and sold for the religious holiday Tripura Sundarijathra Mahotsava. Betting on francolin battles is part of local traditions. They were released into the forest.<sup>58</sup>



**January 28, 2019  
Dungarpur, Dungarpur district,  
State of Rajasthan, India**

One week after the "Annual Bird Festival" which brings together bird watchers from all over the country, 4 sarus cranes (*Grus antigone*, Appendix II), 3 comb ducks (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*, Appendix II), one greylag goose (*Anser anser*), and a pigeon (genre *Columba*), all poisoned by insecticide-coated grains. The feathers of sarus cranes are used on the international market to make fans.<sup>59</sup>



**January 2019  
India  
The pain of kites**

The Makar Sankranti is an old tradition. It has become a competition in recent years. In Jaipur, Rajasthan, or Bangalore in Karnataka, the sky is filled with hundreds of thousands of kites. Kite pilots are fighter pilots and use prohibited weapons. The manjas - ties of the kites - are coated with glass and metal chips. The battle in the sky consists in cutting

as many ties as possible and bring down "enemy" kites. Wrecks drift and crash into trees, cling to the roofs of temples and buildings, to power poles, and sharp, invisible ties settle, twist and dangle. The forsaken ties hurt the birds or entangle them. They remain there, suspended until death or until a first-responder from the rescue service is called. Usually, the volunteer rescuers arrive an hour later to assess the situation. It is most often necessary to call a climber, firefighters with a high ladder or the local power supplier to have the power cut off.



Between 2010 and 2014, 250 birds caught by manjas were recorded by the municipal services of Greater Bangalore. Most rescues take place in the city center and involve large birds. Small birds may go unnoticed. Manjas also attack the human community. Very recently, a man on a moped was butchered by a manja set across the road.

The states of Telangana, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh prohibit the sale of murderous manjas described as "Chinese" because most are made in China. They continue to be sold secretly. On the eve of the Makar Sankranti, 3 seizures took place in bazaars in Hyderabad district, Telangana.

More and more people are calling for Chinese manja to be banned from being imported from China or being manufactured in India. The most popular Chinese brand is called Red Panda and is labelled "industrial use". Alternatives uses feeding the miscellaneous news items or poaching domains are feared or even recorded.

Owls, Asian koels (*Eudynamys scolopaceus*), egrets (Ardeidae family), rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*), large-billed crows (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), eagles, kites, fruit bats (Pteropodidae family) are the main victims of the kite festival. Vulture catches are also reported.<sup>60</sup>

## INDONESIA

**November 5, 2018**

### **Tembung, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia**

Seizure of a brahmyn kite (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II) at a private home. There is hope for a return to the wild.<sup>61</sup>



**November 17, 2018**

### **Serang City, Province of Banten, Indonesia**

Stopping of a truck at a gas station. Seizure of 4851 birds of which 435 were dead: hummingbirds (Trochilidae, Appendix I or II), passerines (genus *Prinia*), greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*), Asian glossy starlings (*Aplonis panayensis*), Daurian starlings (*Agropsar sturninus*), Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*), black-naped orioles (*Oriolus chinensis*), sooty-headed bulbuls (*Pycnonotus aurigaster*), streaked weavers (*Ploceus manyar*), zebra doves (*Geopelia striata*), passerines (genus *Zosterops*), velvet-fronted nuthatches (*Sitta frontalis*), yellow-vented bulbuls (*Pycnonotus goiavier*) and a tonne of palm sugar. Arrest of the driver and his bodyguard. The birds have been placed in quarantine.<sup>62</sup>

**November 21, 2018**

### **Bakauheni, Lampung Province, Indonesia**

Seizure at the harbor of 1536 birds, hummingbirds (Family trochilidae, Appendix I or II), passerines (genus *Prinia*), bar-winged prinia (*Prinia familiaris*), Javan myna (*Acridotheres javanicus*), yellow-vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus goiavier*). They were released in the Tahura forest after tests for avian flu proved negative.<sup>63</sup>



**November 27, 2018**

### **Merak Port, Province of Banten, Indonesia**

Seizure of 2140 birds, prinias (genus *Prinia*) and passerines (genus *Zosterops*) during the unloading of a car ferry and a truck on dock 6 of the port. They were divided between 53 plastic boxes. Two arrests.<sup>64</sup>



**December 11, 2018**

### **Bakauheni Port, Province of Lampung, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia**

Seizure in 2 cars before boarding a car ferry destined for Jakarta, Island of Java, of 3175 singing birds including Sumatran laughingthrushes (*Garrulax bicolor*), crested jays (*Platylophus galericulatus*), maroon-bellied sunbirds (*Leptocoma brasiliana*), Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*), greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), prinias (genus *Prinia*), white-eyes (family Zosteropidae) and tailorbirds (genus *Orthotomus*). After tests to verify non-contamination from avian flu, they were released into the Pesawaran protected forest in presence of the BKSDA (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) and Marison Guciano, director of the NGO Flight. "There is strong pressure on the birds in Sumatra to meet the demand for wild birds in Java". The songbirds in Java have been decimated by poachers and traffickers. The networks have now moved to the Island of Sumatra. The main hotbeds for poaching are around Riau and Bengkulu in the west and south of the island. In the province of Lampung, wholesalers prepare deliveries and recruit smugglers. The Sumatra-Java trafficking is done through the Bakauheni port (Sumatra) and Merak and Cilegon ports (Java). 557 species of birds are protected under Indonesian law but are still being sold in markets, pet shops, public sales and even abroad.<sup>65</sup>

**December 13, 2018  
Deleng Pokhisen, Southeast Aceh Regency,  
Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Four men, aged 31 to 42, were arrested in a hotel in possession of 16 helmeted hornbills (family Bucerotidae), 19 deer antlers, an electronic scale and BB gun made in Viet Nam. The head of the BKSDA of the province pointed out that hornbills are monogamous. "While the females hatch in tree cavities, the males feed them. If the male is killed, the entire family dies."<sup>66</sup>



**December 16, 2018  
Liang, Maluku Province,  
Indonesia**

Seizure in the port inside the back of a car of 19 salmon-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua moluccensis*, Appendix I) crammed into plastic tubes.<sup>67</sup>



**January 2019  
Surabaya, East Java Province, Indonesia**

An Asian crested goshawk (*Accipiter trivirgatus*, Appendix II) has returned to nature. He had been regaining his survival instincts since July 2015 in the Yogyakarta Nature Conservation Foundation's specialized shelter. The man who captured him was sentenced to 7 months in prison and a fine of 17,000 US\$. A crested serpent-eagle (*Spilornis cheela*, Appendix II) that has suffered the same fate and trajectory was also released.<sup>68</sup>

**MALAYSIA**

**November 18, 2018  
Manggatal, State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Six swallow nest seizures (500 g, or at least 35 nests).<sup>69</sup>

**PAKISTAN**

**October 30, 2018  
Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar,  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan**

Seizure of 9 falcons at Peshawar International Airport. The smuggler states that someone whose identity he does not know had given him the birds when he left Qatar. He was released after paying a fine of 300,000 rupees (4,130 US\$). A well-placed source told the national media, Dawn, that the falcons probably belong to the royal family of Qatar. The 9 falcons are returned to the sky a few days later in the presence of Environment Minister Ishtiaq Urmar.<sup>70</sup>

**November 7, 2018  
Between Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa  
Province and Islamabad, Federal Territory of  
Islamabad, Pakistan**

Seizure in a car of 8 falcons. Poachers net them on the high plateaus of Malakand, Hazara and Gilgit-Baltistan on the border with China. According to the authorities, they were destined for export. Two arrests.<sup>71</sup>

**Early December 2018  
Province of Balochistan, Pakistan**

A license to hunt 100 houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) was granted to a member of the royal family of Qatar. Falcon hunting. Theoretically guns are prohibited. Look out! There are also markhors (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I) in the province. "Hunting of rare species of markhors and chakors is an inhumane act," says an official visiting the Koh-i-Takatu mountains. This has not stopped Pakistan from planning to propose a delisting of markhors from Appendix I to Appendix II during the next plenary session of CITES.<sup>72</sup>

## SRI LANKA

**November 17, 2018**  
**Bandaranaike International Airport, Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure in the belongings of a national coming from Singapore of 10 lovebirds (genus *Agapornis*) and 17 parrots (family Psittacidae) for a value estimated at 3630 US\$, i.e. 130 US\$/bird. Fined 560 US\$ for cruelty towards animals and attempted smuggling. The survivors could be sent back to Singapore.<sup>73</sup>



**January 23, 2019**  
**Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure in the luggage of a national arriving from Bangkok of live birds enclosed in plastic boxes: conure birds (*Aratinga* spp., Appendix II), Pacific birds (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II), turquoisines (*Neophema pulchella*, Appendix II), red lorries (*Eos rubra*, Appendix II), and green-cheeked conures (*Pyrrhura molinae*, Appendix II).<sup>74</sup>



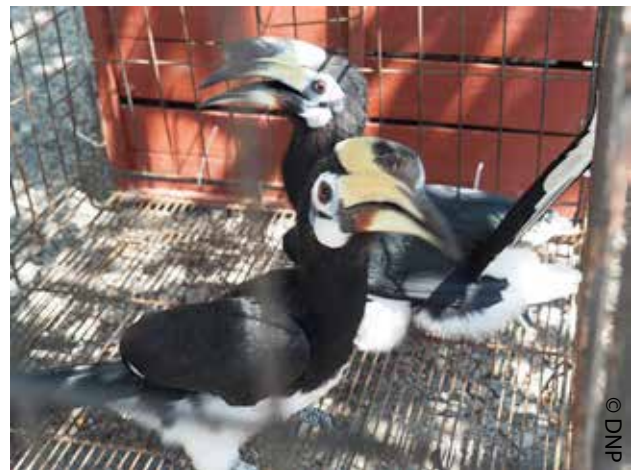
## THAILAND

**October 6, 2018**  
**Kaluu, Tak Bai District, Narathiwat Province, Thailand**

More than 150 birds from several continents were seized from the home of an international trafficker. Asbouh (28 years old) kept sulphur-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*, Appendix II), red-and-green macaws (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II), white cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), multiple other parrots and 7 eagle-owls (*Bubo* spp., Appendix II) in cages. 17 parrot corpses were also discovered. Asbouh has been arrested. He is being held at the Tanyong police station pending legal proceedings.<sup>75</sup>

**October 31, 2018**  
**Khlong Luang District, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand**

The Hawks raided the residence of Mr. Sum (54 years old). Seizure of numerous cages containing a dozen protected bird species, including 2 hornbills (family Bucerotidae, Appendix I or II).<sup>76</sup>



**December 19, 2018**  
**Moo 2, Sriracha District, Chonburi Province, Thailand**



Suratrat Singto had been spotted on Facebook where he was trying to sell protected species including a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus peregrinus*, Appendix I) for 13,000 baht (395 US\$). The Wildhawk unit conducted a search of his home. They found 7 birds of prey including a peregrine falcon, a small sparrow hawk (*Accipiter minullus*, Appendix II), a black buzzard (*Buteogallus anthracinus*, Appendix II) and a black eagle (*Ictinaetus malayensis*, Appendix II). Their value on the underground market is estimated at 170,000 baht (5,160 US\$).<sup>77</sup>



**January 15, 2019**

**Kritsada Nakhon 16 Village, Bangkok Province, Thailand**

Seizure of a common green magpie (*Cissa chinensis*), 5 blossom-header parakeets (*Psittacula roseata*, Appendix II), an Asian koel (*Eudynamis scolopacea*), 2 Chinese francolins (*Francolinus pintadeanus*), 6 Asian fairy-bluebirds (*Irena puella*), and 3 black-throated laughingthrushes (*Garrulax chinensis*) following an appeal on hotline 1362. All were recovered at the house of Daraporn Sawanyathipat (45 years old), who claims to breed birds "for pleasure."<sup>78</sup>

**18 janvier 2019**

**Bangkok, Thaïlande**

**January 18, 2019**

**Bangkok, Thailand**

Seizure of 26 bulbuls (family Pycnonotidae) during a search of Somphan Phutang's home. They were on sale on Facebook on the "Bird Breed Bird Cage" for a minimum of 32 US\$ per bird.<sup>79</sup>



**VIET NAM**

**October 29, 2018**

**Ninh Binh, Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam**

The street vendor ran away at the sight of the agents of the Forest Protection Department, leaving behind a cage of 25 black-crowned night herons (*Ardeidae* family) with tied wings. Birds should be released once they are in good shape. An investigation was opened to find the woman.<sup>80</sup>



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**EUROPE**

**GERMANY**

**December 2018**

**Tasdorf, Municipality of Rüdersdorf, State of Brandenburg, Germany**

Is the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) a learned society, a zoo, or a scientific and commercial breeding? One thing is for sure, the refuge for macaws from the tropics and other exotic psittacids in the suburbs of Berlin arouses astonishment, curiosity and criticism. Martin Guth, ACTP director, former nightclub director, and during his own hours, an unofficial debt collector has a criminal record marked with violence and financial extortion. For the past decade or so, he has devoted his energy to extorting rare

birds from countries, such as Australia, that trade in their wildlife without examining the capacities, references, and profiles of applicants, and especially from island countries affected by hurricanes. In a few years, he has managed to have on shelves the most beautiful collection of endangered birds that is impossible to observe since his establishment is not open to the public and has no educational purpose. Nor is it possible to grasp, if any, the scientific interest of his approach, since no report or article has been published by him or his peers on the acculturation of his dear captives to the winters of continental Europe and on the possible exercises implemented to ensure that birds maintain their survival capacities in their recovered forests. Because the ultimate goal of the ACTP as it stands is release, at least for macaws. Martin Guth has extended the concept of climate refugee to birds, and convinced governments or lower levels of Caribbean island States that the pre- or post-cyclone exfiltration of protected species near Berlin is a life-saving action. His masterpiece in this area of "birds without borders" is to have obtained export permits from Dominica for 2 imperial parrots (*Amazona imperialis*, Appendix I) and 10 red-necked parrots (*Amazona arausiaca*, Appendix I) after hurricane Maria in September 2017.

Martin Guth also has connections and arguments in the Middle East. After the 2014 death of Sheikh Saud bin Mohammed al-Thani, chief curator of the Al Wabra Zoo, the ACTP imported the Spix's macaws (*Cyanopsitta spixii*, Appendix I) held in Qatar, and in September 2018, presented himself as the "guardian" of 142 out of 159 Spix's macaws that are in aviaries around the world. In the wild, the endemic species of Brazil is extinct and a reintroduction program is reportedly underway while the details remain unclear. See "On the Trail" n°21 p. 38.

The Guth mystery is not cleared up. There is also trade in the air. Advertisements were placed on specialized sites offering for sale a pair of glossy black cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*, Appendix II), a pair for 95,000 US\$ or 2 pairs for 180,000 US\$, and purple-crowned lorikeets (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*, Appendix II) for which the price is confidential. According to the announcement, the lorikeets are the offsprings of birds imported from Australia and the singularity of the mutant colors of the plumage is highlighted. These genetic anomalies are sought by collectors. They are willing to put a price on it. According to the export permit provisions issued by the Australian CITES authority, birds and their offspring must be kept in recognized zoos and under a scientific protocol. The Guardian, which carried out an in-depth investigation, points out that the Bundesamt für Naturschutz, the German Federal Agency for nature conservation, is aware of the misuse of the original permit between Australia and Germany. Nevertheless, the German administration remains at a loss and does not seem ready to take corrective measures and shed full light on the motives of Mr. Guth and his handful of associates.<sup>81</sup>

## BELGIUM

**Early October 2018**

### **Welkenraedt, Province of Liège, Belgium**

Seizure of around 20 birds: European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), linnets (*Linaria cannabina*), bullfinches (genus *Pyrrhula*), common reed buntings (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) at the home of a town councilor and candidate in the next elections. He captures birds with nets. The spokesperson for the Walloon civil service highlights that “the species targeted by Philippe Grosdent are extremely protected, on the brink of extinction”.<sup>82</sup>

## **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**November 27, 2018**

### **Liège, Province of Liège, Belgium**

Father and son had used nets to capture chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), common redpolls (*Acanthis flammea*), European serins (*Serinus serinus*) and bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) between January 2013 and March 2015. Given the absence of any former convictions, the court granted the deferment of the sentence for 3 years.<sup>83</sup>



## **SPAIN**

**October 8, 2018**

### **Tudela, Comunidad Foral de Navarra, Spain**

Trial of the 2 directors of the Tudela and Cintruénigo nature reserves and 2 game wardens accused of having carried out a raptor poisoning campaign between April and September 2012 using pesticides such as Demeton-S (withdrawn from the market because of its high toxicity) and thus killing at least 4 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II), an Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*, Appendix II), 2 griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II), a marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II), a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), 129 black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II) and 4 crows (genus *Corvus*). The inventory of birds killed by poisoned bait and possibly other animals that have eaten their carrion is not considered complete. The prosecutor is demanding 3 years in prison for each of the defendants and 130,000 € in damages for the community of Navarre. Ecologistas en Acción and WWF España remind people in 2 reports on “El veneno en España” that between 1992 and 2013, 8,324 wild animal poisonings were reported and that in 2013, 3 poachers were sentenced to 14 months in prison for poisoning 14 marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II) in 2011.<sup>84</sup>



**October 29, 2018**

### **Valmojado, Province of Toledo, Autonomous Community of Castile-La Mancha, Spain**

Discovery of 4 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II), 5 Eurasian buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) and a marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II). Toledo province is known by NGOs for its use of banned pesticide poisons to kill raptors. Officially, 30 red kites were poisoned in the province between 2015 and 2018. In truth, the figure is much more considerable. Many remains have not been spotted or reported by hikers, bird lovers or game wardens.<sup>85</sup>



**November 14, 2018**

### **Port of Almería, Province of Almería, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**

Seizure in a coach disembarking from a car ferry leaving Oujda (Morocco) of 4 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) hidden in a passenger's luggage and blankets. The bus was going to Brussels via France. At least 32 hours of driving.<sup>86</sup>

**Mid-November 2018**

### **San Sebastián de La Gomera, Province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain**

Release of 9 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) illegally caught in a banana plantation.<sup>87</sup>

## **OPERATION ANTITOX**

**End of November 2018**

### **Manzanares, Province of Ciudad Real, Castilla-La Mancha Autonomous Community, Spain**

A series of cat poisonings gave it away. They were followed by the discovery in a field of 2 Spanish imperial eagle carcasses (*Aquila adalberti*, Appendix I). The key to this mystery was found inside the house and in the trunk of the car of the private game reserve guard: several boxes of pesticides and some tools to mix the poison with bait.<sup>88</sup>



## **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Mid-December 2018**

### **Cabeza del Buey, Province of Badajoz, Autonomous Community of Extremadura, Spain**

Voluntary poisoning of red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II). Seizure of 300 g of a pesticide banned in the European Union for 15 years. Seizure of about twenty traps. Questioning of 2 farmers living in a Natura 2000 area.<sup>89</sup>



Red kite in Spain, see “On the Trail” n°15 p. 36, n°20 p. 48, n°21 p. 39.

## FRANCE

**August and October 2018**

### **Camargue Natural Region, Bouches-du-Rhône and Gard Departments, France**

Poaching of a greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*, Appendix II) and a Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*, Appendix II).<sup>90</sup>



Theory

Practice

**October 11, 2018**

### **Dax, Landes Department, France**

A 1000 € fine, 300 of which are suspended, for 2 poachers. State agents had found around 500 frozen passerines in their home including ortolans (*Emberiza hortulana*), common chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*), great tits (*Parus major*), dunnocks (*Prunella modularis*), European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), Eurasian nuthatches (*Sitta europaea*), cirl buntings (*Emberiza cirlus*). In a way, the poachers are enticed by the judges. For them, killing and selling a robin doesn't deserve more than a 2 € fine.<sup>91</sup>



**October 16, 2018**

### **Pau, Pyrénées-Atlantique Department, France**

The court of Cassation rejected the appeal formed by 11 ortolan poachers (*Emberiza hortulana*) attempting to legally validate the concept of "administrative tolerance" which, under some geographical and cultural conditions, would enable hunters to proceed without breaking the law. The plaintiffs received support from local MPs, notably Boris Vallaud, a socialist loyal to former French President Mitterand, who deemed ortolan tasting to be an art, and Lionel Causse, member of the party supporting sitting President Macron.<sup>92</sup>



**November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

### **Ferrière-la-Petite, Nord Department, France**

It's also the Day of the Dead for the birds. Three red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) and a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were victims of a hunter and a rumor. It whispers that diurnal birds of prey are killers of partridges and pheasants released a few days before the opening of hunting season.<sup>93</sup>

**OPERATION REGGIO 3**

**November 24-26, 2018**

### **Toll of La Turbie and Menton, Alpes-Maritimes Department, Mont-Blanc Tunnel, Haute-Savoie Department, Fréjus Tunnel, Savoie Department, France. Border with Italy.**

ONCFS agents checked 2,500 vehicles at the La Turbie tollbooth (A8 motorway linking Aix-en-Provence to Menton), at Menton on the departmental road and at the exits of the Mont-Blanc and Fréjus tunnels. 65 cars and 3 coaches chartered by ornithology clubs carried 9,500 birds. Of these, only 6 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) were without breeding rings. Four young people heading for Marseilles were given a fine. They too had just returned from the Reggio Emilia ornithological fair, the largest in Europe (see page 59). The Nice Public Prosecutor's Office had requested this roadside check. Prospective smugglers were probably deterred by the presence of carabinieri on the fair (cf. p.59).<sup>94</sup>

**January 12 and 13, 2019**

### **Solliès-Ville and La Crau, Var Department, France**

- Seizure of about 10 traps for European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*) as well as other passerines; 5 freshly killed birds, and 8 others at the poacher's home.

- Seizure of 28 traps set in the field and 1903 traps at the poacher's home, flying ants used as bait, 17 hunting weapons, and 75 passerines - mostly robins - in the freezer. The ONCFS reminds people that the offense of destroying protected species is punishable by 2 years' imprisonment and a fine of 150,000 €.<sup>95</sup>





**January 29, 2019**

**Mormoiron, Vaucluse Department, France**

By order of the State prosecutor, seizure of 19 passerines, European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), rock sparrows (*Petronia petronia*), hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), rock buntings (*Emberiza cia*), common reed buntings (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), European serins (*Serinus serinus*), about 30 frozen passerines, glue sticks, electronic callers, and a rifle.<sup>96</sup>



**ITALY**

**Early October 2018**

**Serle Forest, Lombardy Region, Italy**

A meticulous search by the State Forestry Corps agents attempting to find a missing young girl allowed the seizure of dozens of bird traps. They were gathered and destroyed.<sup>97</sup>



**October 2018**

**Mazzano, Preseglie, Poncarale, Rezzato, Ghedi and Calvisano, Province of Brescia, Lombardy Region, Italy**

Multiple infractions. Twelve indictments. No hunting permits. Unlawful arms possession, use of traps and electronic baits. Poaching of European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) and common reed buntings (*Emberiza schoeniclus*).<sup>98</sup>



**October 16, 2018**

**Naresso, Lombardy Region, Italy**

Seizure of several song thrushes (*Turdus philomelos*) in a hunting cabin and 2 rifles. Fines of 1,078 € for the 2 offenders.<sup>99</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**End of October 2018**

**Somma Vesuviana, Campania Region, Italy**

On returning from a trapping campaign, Mr. X, 57 years old, was greeted outside his home by plainclothes carabinieri and NOGEZ (Nucleo Operativo Guardie Eco Zoofile) agents who asked him to open the trunk of his car. Seizure of several dozen European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), serins (*Serinus serinus*), linnets (*Linaria cannabina*) and chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*). To avoid bird mortality as much as possible, they were released shortly thereafter to areas conducive to their survival and safety.<sup>100</sup>

**OPERATION ROBIN (OPERATION PETTIROSSO)**

**End of October 2018**

**Province of Brescia, Lombardy Region, Italy**

102 official reports. Seizure of 2400 frozen birds including 500 European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), 200 live birds, 56 rifles, thousands of cartridges, 1,235 nets, traps and poaching lures. Joint mobilization of 60 carabinieri, members of bird protection associations, hunters and "ordinary" citizens.<sup>101</sup>



**End of October 2018**

**Province of Lecco, Lombardy Region, Italy**

Rescue of a kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II), a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), a Eurasian sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II) and a Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II). They are in the care of the Valpredina shelter. Prognosis is optimistic. Seizure of several traps.<sup>102</sup>



## End of October 2018

### Cosenza, Calabria Region, Italy

Seizure of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), serins (*Serinus serinus*) in the work site of a metallic and demolition waste dealer. Arrest made by the carabinieri.<sup>103</sup>

## Early November 2018

### Serra San Bruno, Calabria Region, Italy

A rifle and 11 chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) seized. Interpellation of a 19-year-old male.<sup>104</sup>



## Early November 2018

### Sila National Park, Calabria Region, Italy

Poaching of passerines is rampant in Italy. Seizure of several meadow pipits (*Anthus pratensis*), a rifle, an acoustic lure.<sup>105</sup>



## Early November 2018

### Ribera, Sicily Region, Italy

Seizure of 120 birds including 117 Eurasian skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*). All dead. They were intended for the food industry. Sale to restaurants on the side. Arrest of a 50-year-old man. Seizure of a rifle, ammunition and sound bait.<sup>106</sup>

## Early November 2018

### Manduria, Apuglia Region, Italy

It looks like a plane crash. It is a common kestrel falcon crash (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II) killed by a gust of poachers. From the north of France to the south of Italy, the anti-birds of prey are watching.<sup>107</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

### November 4, 2018

#### Valle Sabbia, Province of Brescia, Lombardy Region, Italy

A hundred birds in less than 180 minutes. Each in his own hut, the 3 poachers, including 2 brothers aged 65 and 66, were competing. Seizure of weapons, mistel thrushes (*Turdus viscivorus*), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*), European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*) and chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), all dead.<sup>108</sup>



### November 4, 2018

#### Scafati, Campania Region, Italy

Sale of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) in a local grocery store. The goldfinch "trader" is 60 years old. 53 seizures. They were released by sworn agents of the NGO Agroambiente into the Falcone Borsellino public garden in Pianura, whose reopening is requested by a group of residents.<sup>109</sup>

### November 7, 2018

#### Treviso Bresciano, Province of Brescia, Lombardy Region, Italy

Seizure in a farm shed of Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) and hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*). Transfer to the Valpredina refuge before release.<sup>110</sup>

### November 8, 2018

#### Avellino, Campania Region, Italy

Sixteen European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) in the trunk of a car and 15 more in the poacher's home. Seizure of nets.<sup>111</sup>

### November 18, 2018

#### Terni, Umbria Region, Italy

Poaching of chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*). Two brought into custody (52 and 72 years old) at dawn.<sup>112</sup>

### November 18, 2018

#### Palermo, Sicily Region, Italy

Another raid of the carabinieri on the Ballaro market. Seizure of 49 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and one European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*). They were released into Villa Giulia Park.<sup>113</sup>

**November 24 and 25, 2018  
Reggio Emilia, Emilia-Romagna  
Region, Italy**

The 79th edition of the bird fair did not end well for 6 exhibitors. They are accused of forgery, trafficking in protected species and mistreatment towards animals. 71 specimens were seized by the carabinieri assisted by the NGOs Lipu and Legambiente. The bar-pouched wreathed hornbills (*Rhyticeros undulatus*, Appendix II), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*), Eurasian scops owls (*Otus scops*, Appendix II), red-billed leiothrixes (*Leiothrix lutea*, Appendix II), serins (*Serinus serinus*) and blue rock thrushes (*Monticola solitarius*) were confiscated and are currently under the care of "Il Pettiroso" shelter near Modena. The native species could in time be released back to nature. The fate of the exotic species, such as the red-billed leiothrix whose value can reach tens of thousands of euros, is uncertain.<sup>114</sup>



**November 2018  
San Zenone degli Ezzelini,  
Veneto Region, Italy**

Seizure of European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), tree pipits (*Anthus trivialis*), Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), serins (*Serinus serinus*) and bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) alive. Interpellation of the poacher. Seizure of nets, traps, decoys, cages.<sup>115</sup>



**November 2018  
Piombo Dese, Piazzola sul Brenta, Carmignano di Brenta, Curtarolo, Villafranca Padovana, Lozzo Atesino and Campodoro, Province of Padua, Veneto Region, Italy**

Seizure of 16 dead passerines, including common reed buntings (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) that came from northern Europe to spend the winter in the Mediterranean basin.<sup>116</sup>



**November 2018  
Gardone Val Trompia, Capovalle and  
Marmentino, Province of Brescia, Lombardy  
Region, Italy**



Three poachers, one of whom was 65 years old, specialized in European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*): 134 were found in a freezer. The robin is eaten on skewers. At home of 2 peers, bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), Eurasian wrens (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), dunnocks (*Prunella modularis*), hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*) were found in the same state, awaiting the same fate. About fifteen birds that served as callers taken to Valpredina tens of kilometres away, a rest and fitness centre for those who could be released, a cloister for the crippled.<sup>117</sup>



**November 2018  
Ischia Island, Campania Region, Italy**

Poaching of a barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) and a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) on Thursday and Tuesday, days of "hunting silence". Injured, they were taken care of by ENPA (Ente Nazionale per la Protezione degli Animali).<sup>118</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS  
November 27, 2018  
Vobarno, Province of Brescia, Region of  
Lombardy, Italy**

A father, a son, a friend. 26 bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) and chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) caught in a net and killed by lead shot.<sup>119</sup>

**End of November 2018  
San Tammaro and Maddaloni, Campania  
Region, Italy**

Two separate interrogations for transport and capture of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*). In the first case, there were 5 of them alive in the trunk of the car. In the second, there were 3 of them in a cage, whistling like tenors to attract their peers who would have been greeted by a net or lead shot.<sup>120</sup>



**End of November 2018  
Castrovillari, Calabria Region, Italy**

Seizure of 13 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*). They were temporarily given to the CRAS (Centro di Recupero per Animali Selvatici) in Rende while waiting for the district attorney to approve their release.<sup>121</sup>



**December 2018  
Fregona, Veneto Region, Italy**

Industrial bird poaching is spreading in Italy. An investigation launched in March of Treviso, extended to Lombardy, Emilia Romagna, Apulia, Trentino and Campania, resulted in the seizure of 275 live birds which, after a veterinary examination, were released into their natural habitat in the presence of many pupils from the Fregona primary school. Target species include Eurasian skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*), redwings (*Turdus iliacus*), song thrushes (*Turdus philomelos*), fieldfares (*Turdus pilaris*), Eurasian bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*),

chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), crossbills (genus *Loxia*), Eurasian collared doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*). The birds were caught for commercial purposes for the food or pet sectors. Seven people arrested and several items of poaching equipment were seized.<sup>122</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**December 12, 2018**

**Vobarno, Province of Brescia, Region of Lombardy, Italy**

He had already been arrested on November 28 for trapping protected birds. Fifteen days later, 2 patrols found him in the same place with 2 different partners. Seizure of Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*), chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*) and haxfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) being used as live decoys, phonic decoys, nets and about 10 dead bramblings and Eurasian siskins. The man is 68 years old. As the local press says, "the fox changes his fur, not his habits".<sup>123</sup>

**December 12, 2018**

**Oderzo, Veneto Region, Italy**

Seizure of nets totalling 50 m in length and 40 songbirds in cages from an seasoned poacher/trafficker.<sup>124</sup>

**Mid-December 2018**

**Milan, Lombardy  
Region, Italy**

A grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) landed in a gymnasium. It turns out he escaped a month and a half ago from his owner's home. She had not reported it to the police station. She says she bought the bird in Spain a few years ago but wasn't able to prove it.<sup>125</sup>



**End of December 2018**

**Valnerina and Spoleto Valleys, Umbria Region, Italy**

Seizure of smartphones with birdsong applications used as bait, halogen lamps for night hunting, 8 rifles, 5,000 cartridges, and boar traps. Nine arrests. Poachers were active in the Valnerina and Spoleto valleys and targeted primarily chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*).<sup>126</sup>



**January 2, 2019**

**San Valentino Torio, Salerno Province, Campania region, Italy**

Seizure by the carabinieri and volunteers from Ente Nazionale Protezione Animali (ENPA) of several elegant goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and siskins (*Spinus spinus*). They were entrusted to Centro di Recupero per Animali Selvatici (CRAS) in Salerno before being released into the wild if possible.<sup>127</sup>



**PORTUGAL**

**November 22-24, 2018**

**Marinha Grande and Leiria, Central Region, Portugal**

Seizure of 32 budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), 6 cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) and 2 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) from a 23-year-old male. He stole birds from balconies and terraces, and raised 13 pitbulls.<sup>128</sup>

**December 12, 2018**

**District of Viana do Castelo, Northern Region, Portugal**

Seizure of a carrion crow (*Corvus corona*) and 2 saffron finches (*Carduelis carduelis*).<sup>129</sup>

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**October 12, 2018**

**Chesterfield, Derbyshire County, England, United Kingdom**

Mary Holliday Lamar, a 51-year-old American citizen, is sentenced to a 18-week suspended prison sentence plus 12 months of parole, 120 hours of community work and a fine worth 1135 £ or 1275 US\$ for unlawful possession of a live peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) equipped with a fake identification ring as well as a frozen peregrine falcon. The investigation revealed that the ring on the dead falcon was used to regularize the young wild one's situation.<sup>130</sup>



**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**November 27, 2018**

**Norwich, Norfolk County, England, United Kingdom**

Sentencing of Daniel Lingham (65 years old) to 18 weeks in prison. Police, on a search warrant, seized from his home, under his bed, in the kitchen and dining room 5,266 eggs of western marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II), common linnets (*Linaria cannabina*), common nightingales (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), European nightjars (*Caprimulgus europaeus*), European turtle doves (*Streptopelia turtur*), common chiffchaffs (*Phylloscopus collybita*), little-ringed plovers (*Charadrius dubius*), woodlarks (*Lullula arborea*) and European kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*). All his climbing equipment, camouflage uniforms, tubes for threading eggs and egg identification manuals were seized. He is banned from going to Norfolk nature reserves for 10 years. His driver's license was revoked and his Nissan seized. The egg collection, some of which are identified by hand inscriptions on the shells, was handed over to the Natural History Gallery. In 2005, he was sentenced to 12 weeks in prison for holding 3,603 wild bird eggs.<sup>131</sup>



## REPEATED OFFENSE

January 10, 2019

London, England, United Kingdom

Three years in prison. Coming from Johannesburg, he tried to pass through security at Heathrow with 19 bird of prey eggs wrapped around his abdomen (cf. "On the Trail" n°21 p.43). According to experts, each egg sells for 2,800-11,000 € in the black market. Most of them were stolen from eyries on cliff edges.

Lendrum claims to have wanted to save the birds from deforestation. He has already been convicted of similar offenses in Canada, Brazil, and Africa. Incubated after the seizure, at least 8 eggs have hatched.<sup>132</sup>



© Border Force



January 29, 2019

Hayes, London Borough of Hillingdon, England, United Kingdom

Milo, one Harris hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II) that repels birds at Heathrow Airport has been robbed. Three men forced a window into the owner's Mercedes while she was validating her room at the Mercure Hotel. 1,000 £ reward for whoever helps to find the bird of prey.<sup>133</sup>

## SLOVENIA

October 2018

Slovenia

Seizure in a bus of 1349 dead songbirds: red-throated pipits (*Anthus cervinus*), white wagtails (*Motacilla alba*), meadow pipits (*Anthus pratensis*), tree pipits (*Anthus trivialis*), Eurasian skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*). The vehicle was coming from Romania and was on its way to Italy. The goods stashed in 15 boxes inside the baggage compartment were intended for restaurants.<sup>134</sup>

## Pangolins

The four African pangolin species (*Manis gigantea*, *M. temminckii*, *M. tetradactyla*, *M. tricuspis*) et the four Asian species (*Manis crassicaudata*, *M. culionensis*, *M. javanica* and *M. pentadactyla*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

"On the Trail" n°23

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

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Togo	95	9
	Uganda	3,000	4*
Asia	China	490	20
		430	23
		650	7*
	Malaysia	3,200	38

\* Cf. chapter "Pangolins, Rhinoceros and Elephants"

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

Continent	Country	US\$/animal	Ref.
Africa	Zimbabwe	5,000	12
Asia	China	1,810 - 2,550	15
		56,000	35
	India	100,000	36

## AFRICA

### CAMEROON

#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

Early December 2018

Abong-Mbang, East Province, Cameroon

Seizure of 45 kg of scales. Five arrests including a female bushmeat seller and her husband. One of the suspects managed to escape thanks to the confusion caused by a gathering of supporters in front of the police station. The scales wrapped in rice bags and backpacks were bound for Yaoundé.<sup>1</sup>

January 25, 2019

Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon

Seized in a taxi, 5 hippopotamus teeth from Chad, about a hundred kg of scales and precious stones. Arrest of 4 men.<sup>2</sup>

January 31, 2019

Doumé, Eastern Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 40 kg of scales. The city of Doumé, 278 km from Yaoundé on the Yaoundé-Bertoua road, is a crossroads for traffickers from Abong-Mbang, Dimako, Bertoua, Nden-Ndam, Kouen and Mendim. The seizure could have been more successful if the second wanted trafficker had not fled by motorcycle, with bags in the back seat when rumors spread that several gendarmerie vehicles were circulating in the city.<sup>3</sup>

## COTE D'IVOIRE

### REPEATED OFFENSE

**October 19, 2018**

**Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

Seizure of 150 kg of scales at Plateau Dokui, north of the capital. Arrest of a repeat offender involved in trafficking in 2017 and promptly released (see "On the Trail" n° 18 p. 37 and n°22 p. 51). He is collaborating with Chinese and Vietnamese expatriates. Côte d'Ivoire is reportedly in the process of strengthening sanctions.<sup>4</sup>

## GABON

**Early January 2018**

**Bas Ogooué, Gabon**

Police search of a boat in the wetlands of Lower Ogooué. Discovery of a descaled pangolin in the middle of other animal parts.<sup>5</sup>



## MALAWI

**December 2018**

**Malawi**

Emergency care. Transfer to a shelter. Treatment on a hind paw wounded then release.<sup>6</sup>



## MOZAMBIQUE

**Early October 2018**

**Niassa National Reserve, Niassa Province, Mozambique**

The vets of Saving the Survivors provided a mercy killing to a female pangolin lying near a trap but unfortunately suffering from a severed left front leg. It took a sedative injection to stretch her and see the irreparable damage.<sup>7</sup>



## NIGERIA

**November and December 2018**

**Nigeria**

Between November and December, seizure by the zone A customs of 7560.9 kg of pangolin scales packed in 195 bags, of 22 bundles of used clothes and 404 out of used tires. Seven arrests.<sup>8</sup>

## TOGO

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**December 5, 2018**

**Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo**

Seizure of 37 kg of scales. Trade value is estimated at 2 million FCFA (3500 US\$, 95 US\$/kg) on the Togolese market. Mother and son were about to make the delivery. The client has not yet been identified.<sup>9</sup>

## ZAMBIA

**October 2018**

**Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia. Border with Malawi.**

David Phiri was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment with hard labour for having detained and attempted to trade 2 live pangolins.<sup>10</sup>



**November 23, 2018**

**Kalulushi, Copperbelt Province, Zambia**

Sentencing of a Chinese citizen to 5 years in prison with hard labor for attempting to smuggle nearly 600 pangolin scales. He had been stopped at the Ndola Airport.<sup>11</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**October 3, 2018**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of a pangolin valued at 5,000 US\$. Appearance of Lovemore Mufamba, Alec Muzhambe, Enock Mare and Justin Kararira, aged 33 to 43 years. Assisted by Master Chinamhora, they were released on bail of 100 US\$ each.<sup>12</sup>

**18 octobre 2018**  
**Northern Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**

John Khumalo and Sithembiso Tshuma were sentenced to 9 years in prison. Their arrest dates back to May 2018 (see "On the Trail" n°21, p.45).<sup>13</sup>



**December 25, 2018**  
**Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe**

Search on Christmas Day at Welcome Moyo's (21 years old). Seizure of 2 live pangolins, 4 and 10 kg, and 4 kg of copper cables stolen from the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC). Moyo says that the pangolins and copper belong to a roommate and demands, through his lawyer, to be released on bail.<sup>14</sup>

**ASIA**

**CHINA**

**Early October 2018**  
**Tonglu County, Zhejiang Province, China**

A 60-year-old farmer couple was charged with buying a live pangolin weighing about 5kg through a clandestine channel posted on WeChat, then killing it, stripping it of its scales, skinning it and storing it as meat in a freezer before having the bones and scales crushed at a pharmacy. Following the advice of traditional pharmacopoeia, the woman hoped to cure her liver problems with a pangolin treatment. The animal was bought for 17,800 yuan or 2,550 US\$ from an animal trafficker in Tonglu, who himself bought it for 12,600 yuan or 1,810 US\$ in Lishui district, 300 km from Tonglu in Zhejiang province.<sup>15</sup>



Additional identification difficulty: scales crushed

**October 4, 2018**  
**Baiyangcun, Sichuan Province, and Xiongacunxiang, Anhui Province, China**

Release into mountain forests of 2 pangolins - 60 and 64 cm long and weighing 4 and 3.2 kg - collected from a roadside during the night in July and in a village.<sup>16</sup>

**Early November 2018**  
**Province of Hunan, China**

Seizure of 32 live pangolins. They had been force-fed with flour just before being delivered to restaurants. Only 16 pangolins survived. The traffickers were paid per weight.<sup>17</sup>

**Early November 2018**  
**Hunan Province, China**

Seizure of 216 pangolins, 66 kg of scales, 20 Tibetan antelope horns (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I), other animal parts and 18 million yuan (2.6 million US\$). One surviving pangolin was rescued. Culture clash : 45 km from Viet Nam, the city of Fangchenggang in the Guangxi Autonomous Region operates 2 nuclear reactors, and is also a historic hotbed for international trafficking of pangolins caught in Malaysia. It was a network from Fangchenggang that supplied the Chinese market with pangolin for culinary and apothecary purposes. The second trafficking circle was located in Guangzhou, Guangdong province. The Guangzhou platform had commercial networks in Hunan, Fujian, Jiangxi and Hainan provinces. 129 suspects were taken into custody. 25 have been arrested and 32 potential internet buyers are being identified. Most of the network's customers are hotels and restaurants. The network was dismantled thanks to confidential information given to the police, and the find of several pangolin dishes on the menu of a Chenzhou City restaurant in Hunan Province.<sup>18</sup>





**November 10, 2018**  
**Wenshan City, Yunnan Province, China**



Mr. and Mrs. Liang checked into their hotel with an unexpected nocturnal guest. A pangolin with some torn off scales on the right front leg was detected by the hotel's security cameras. Investigation is in progress. A message on WeChat inviting everyone to "adopt" a pangolin was eventually detected.<sup>19</sup>

**November 16, 2018**  
**Hong Kong International Airport, China**

Seizure of 109 kg of pangolin scales in 4 suitcases carried by 2 women aged 40 from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, via Casablanca, Morocco and Doha, Qatar. Final destination: Macau. The smugglers risk 10 years in prison. The value of the haul is 53,530 US\$ or 490/kg US\$.<sup>20</sup>



**November 19, 2018**  
**Wuhan, Hubei Province, China**

172 g of scales were seized from the luggage of a Chinese expatriate coming from Angola via Hong Kong on a China Southern Airlines flight.<sup>21</sup>

**December 16, 2018 - January 2, 2019**  
**Hong Kong, China**

Exceptional customs vigilance in the run-up to the Chinese New Year: seizures in postal parcels or luggage of animal and plant products worth a total of 255,000 US\$, including pangolin scales, agar wood and cacti, as well as one million cigarettes, counterfeit luxury goods, 62 kg of cocaine and other psychotropic substances such as gamma-butyrolactone (GBL).<sup>22</sup>



**End of December 2018**  
**Zhangzhou, Fujian Province, China**



Xin'an Evening News reports that a man was sentenced to 7 months in prison and given a fine equivalent to 730 US\$ for having fraudulently purchased, on April 22, 2018, 1 kg of pangolin scales for alleged therapeutic purposes at a price of about 2,940 yuan, or 430 US\$.<sup>23</sup>

**December 29, 2018 to January 3, 2019**  
**Hong Kong International Airport, China**

Seizure by postal customs of 240 kg of pangolin scales in 12 packages from Malaysia officially transporting "mascara". Subsequent seizure of 200 kg in the To Kwa Wan and Yau Tong districts. Interrogation of a man and 3 women aged 43 to 63 years.<sup>24</sup>



**January 9, 2019**  
**Dongxing, Guangxi Province, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

Seizure of 853.6 g of pangolin scales in the pockets of a Vietnamese woman's pants and in plastic bags tied around her ankles.<sup>25</sup>



## INDIA

**October 12, 2018**

### **Thane, Maharashtra State, India**

After being tipped off, the criminal police set a trap in the area around the Saket Bridge in the Rabodi district. After 2 days of waiting, Devji Namdeo Sawant (42 years old), Sanjay Namdeo Bhosle (46 years old) and Ramdas Padma Patil (56 years old) fell into the trap on Friday. They were carrying a backpack holding a female pangolin 92 cm long and weighing about 8 kg, intending to sell her in the city. At the age of 3, she is said to have come from the Mahad area of the Konkan coastal region. Slightly injured, she was taken to Sanjay Gandhi National Park for treatment and was eventually released.<sup>26</sup>

**October 28, 2018**

### **Halagoor, Mandya District, Karnataka State, India**

One live pangolin, 2 arrests. Anil Kumar and Syed Inaytulla arrived from the Chitradurga district with the intention of selling it in the city. The police intercepted 2 but the other 3 fled. The traffickers have been remanded in custody. The animal was released into the forest.<sup>27</sup>

**December 4, 12 and 23, 2018**

### **Maidalpur, Nabarangpur District, Malkangiri District,**

### **Gunupur, Rayagada District, Odisha State, India**

In view of the frightening increase in pangolin poachings, forestry personnel are focusing on this traffic. They are already credited with 3 successive seizures this month. On Tuesday the 4th, during a raid in the village of Maidalpur, they discovered Raisingh Jani and Bhima Jani in possession of a 13 kg animal.

On Wednesday the 12th they arrested 7 people, including a teacher, who were holding another pangolin in Malkangiri District.

On December 23, near a bus stop in the town of Gunupur, they intercepted a car loaded with a pangolin and 5 people, including 2 women: Ashis Das, Balaram Behera, Subhalakshmi Behera, Amulya Barik and Lakshmi. Winter is the species' breeding season. The poaching continues.<sup>28</sup>

### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

**December 10, 2018**

### **Rantalodi, Chandrapur District, Maharashtra State, India**

According to the NGOTiger Hunting End Association (THEA), the young Dinesh Tarte has already sold at least 8 pangolins in Andhra Pradesh. This time he was arrested with a live pangolin thanks to information from the NGO. Dinesh Tarte refused to confirm that he had captured the animal inside the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. He only conceded that he had taken him "in a forest".<sup>29</sup>

**December 22, 2018**

### **Shirdhon, Raigad District, Maharashtra State, India**

Roadside arrest of a 42-year-old man. Bamanu was going to sell a 6.6 kg pangolin in very poor condition to Panvel. The victim was put on an 8-hour drip and handed over to the NGO Resqink Association for Wildlife Welfare (RAWW).<sup>30</sup>



**December 23, 2018**

### **Gunupur, Rayagada District, Odisha State, India**

During nighttime patrol near the bus station, a living pangolin was found inside a searched car. Five arrests, including that of Laxmi Sabar, 50, a woman specializing in the sale of pangolins. The other 4 were buyers from Andhra Pradesh.<sup>31</sup>

## **GANG**

### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

**January 4, 2019**

### **Brahmapur, Ganjam District, Odisha State, India**

Dismantling of a gang. The scales were purchased from poachers in Kalahandi, Kandhamal and Buddh in Odisha State, Seoni and Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh and Gondia, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra.

They were then grouped together and transported by train to Guwahati in Assam, but also by trucks officially carrying sheep, buffalo and cow skins. The gang leader, a man named Amir Hussain Laskar, acknowledged that the scales were then shipped to China via Myanmar and Viet Nam by Samsuddin father and son, Mohammed Jamshed and Mohammad Mustaq residing in Khordha and Berhampur. All suspects have already been involved twice in scale trafficking in Madhya Pradesh.<sup>32</sup>

**January 7, 2019**

**Mumbra, Thane district, State of Maharashtra, India**

Arrest of Sagar Maruti Pawar (33 years old) and Abdul Jalil Yunus Mahmrut (54 years old) in flagrante delicto of attempting to market a pangolin.<sup>33</sup>



**January 16, 2019**

**Malkangiri district, State of Odisha, India**

Arrest of 8 people for illegally detaining a 6kg pangolin. Five of the accused are Bengalese.<sup>34</sup>

**January 23, 2019**

**Dahisar Mori, Thane District, Maharashtra State, India**

Seizure of a pangolin. According to the police, it has an international value of 56,000 US\$. Two arrests. The alleged trajectory of smuggling was from India to China via Nepal and Bhutan.<sup>35</sup>

**January 29, 2019**

**Katraj, Pune District, Maharashtra State, India**

Seizure of a pangolin. 9.2 kg. 128 cm long. An adult specimen of exceptional size. According to the authorities, it has an international value of nearly 100,000 US\$. The 4 agricultural workmen aged 24 to 26 years old were arrested thanks to a roadblock. The pangolin was in the trunk.<sup>36</sup>

## **MALAYSIA**

**End of October 2018**

**Kota Kinabalu, Sabah State, Malaysia**

Appearance of Chai Kok Hiong, accused of attempting to export 8 t of pangolin scales to China in 2 containers and 226 bags in the port of Sepanggar (see "On the Trail" n°18 p. 38). This is one of the largest seizures recorded in "On the Trail". The case dates back to the end of July 2017. He pleads not guilty. He was released on bail of 80,000 ringgits (19,000 US\$) and under judicial supervision.<sup>37</sup>

**December 6, 2018**

**Port Dickson, State of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia**

In the presence of the Director General of the Wildlife and National Parks Department, incineration of 2.8 tons of scales worth 9 million US\$ (approximately 3,200 US\$/kg) from seizures made at Kuala Lumpur Airport in 2017 (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 42, n°18 p. 40, n°19 p. 53) and a seizure made at Port Klang on September 13, 2018 that had previously remained confidential. Ghana and Cameroon were mentioned as countries of origin.<sup>38</sup>



**January 3, 2019**

**Kota Belud, Sabah State, Borneo Island, Malaysia**



Seizure of a live pangolin and a luxury car. Arrest of the 20-year-old driver. The police say he is liable to a minimum fine of 12,000 US\$ and a prison sentence of one year.<sup>39</sup>

## **NEPAL**

**October 8, 2018**

**Bhimeshwar, Dolakha District, Province No. 3, Nepal**

Arrest by the police of Saurabh Gole (19 years old) and Arjun Devkota (23 years old). They carried 2.9 kg of scales.<sup>40</sup>

**October 31, 2018**

**Dolakha District, Province No. 3, Nepal**

Prahlad Khadka (20 years old) didn't run fast enough. With his 3 accomplices arriving on 2 motorcycles, he is the only one who was caught. They carried 2.6 kg of pangolin scales.<sup>41</sup>



## THAILAND

**October 10, 2018**

**Rangsit, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand**

facebook

Jirasak Kasemsorn (32 years old) offered a framed pangolin skin with its scales for sale on Facebook. He was asking for 14,000 baht (431 US\$). The Hawks spotted his announcement and expressed interest in the trophy. An appointment was set up in a store's parking lot. When Jirasak Kasemsorn arrived, he fell into the trap. The skin was seized and he was charged with the illegal possession of a protected species.<sup>42</sup>



## VIET NAM

**January 4, 2019**

**Ho Chi Minh, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 2 pangolins, one male and one female, found in bags on the street.<sup>43</sup>

## Pangolins, Rhinoceros and Elephants

AFRICA



## SOUTH AFRICA

**Late October 2018**

**Pienaar, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

An 18-year-old secondary school student was arrested for illegal possession of elephant tusks and a live pangolin. He claims that they belong to his brother-in-law, who was not arrested.<sup>1</sup>

**December 11, 2018**

**Kuruman, Northern Cape Province, South Africa**

Three men, aged 32 to 34, were arrested for illegal possession of ivory, pangolin scales and platinum. The seizure is estimated to be worth nearly 70,000 US\$.<sup>2</sup>

## NAMIBIA

**27 novembre 2018**

**November 27, 2018**

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

Henrique Valentino (38 years old), an Angolan soldier, was found guilty of illegal possession of 20 elephant skins and 16 pangolin scales. He has a choice between serving 4 years in prison or paying a fine of 3400 US\$.<sup>3</sup>



## UGANDA

**January 24 – February 8, 2019**

**Border crossing point of Elegu, Northern Region, border along South Sudan and Kampala, Uganda**

Seizure of 762 tusks or tusks sections with a total weight of 3,299 kg estimated at 2.35 million US\$ or 713 US\$/kg and 423.7 kg of pangolin scales valued at approximately 1.27 million US\$ or 3,000 US\$/kg. The smuggling detection was carried out using a new mobile scanner allowing a non-intrusive inspection.



The truck convoy came from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The gang's modus operandi recalls the hollow log technique filled with raw ivory and pangolin scales (see " On the Trail " n°15 p. 98, n°19 p. 104) between Nigeria and Cambodia and Mozambique and Cambodia.



This time, the logs are partially dug and filled with illicit cargo drowned in wax blocks. The tips of the logs are then reconstituted with wood, sawdust and ankles by a cabinetmaker who has extensive expertise.

Two Vietnamese, Dhan Yan Chiew and Nguyen Son Dong, director of a Wisdom Theta Limited, were arrested at the scene. They will be released after payment of a bail equal to 4,060 US\$ and the bond by third parties equal to 13,000 US\$. Three residents of Kisenyi apparently vouched for them. Passports will be taken away and they will have to certify their presence everyday to the Anti-Corruption Court. 18 Vietnamese are now wanted by the police. The adulterated cargo came from the Democratic Republic of Congo according to preliminary findings. Having entered Uganda, it would have had no other choice but to enter Kenya and leave Africa through the port of Mombasa.<sup>4</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

January 7, 2019

### Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

Arrest of 53-year-old man for illegally detaining pangolin scales and a suspected rhino horn. A second man, known to the police, managed to escape.<sup>5</sup>

ASIA

## CHINA

November 22 and 25, 2018

### Mengding Checkpoint, Gengma Dai and Va Autonomous County, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.

Seizure in 2 operations of 223 g of pangolin scales, fragments of elephant skin and rhinoceros horns, woolly flying squirrel hair (*Eupetaurus cinereus*), Siberian musk deer preputial glands (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) and other animal by-products weighing a total of 741 g.<sup>6</sup>



January 16, 2019

### Port of Hong Kong, China

The 40-ft refrigerated container, which was supposed to be full of meat from Nigeria, was full of surprises:

- Seizure of 8.2 t of pangolin scales. Value equal to 5.35 million US\$ or 650 US\$/kg according to customs.



- Seizure of 1,000 tusks or tusks sections with a total weight of 2100 kg with a value equal to 255,000 US\$ or 120 US\$ /kg according to customs.

Arrest of the alleged importer and his employee in the Mong Kok district.



According to the newspaper The Post, one kilo of ivory is traded around 293/kg US\$ in Africa and around US\$ 900/kg in mainland China, and the kilo of scales around 29 US\$ in Africa and 739 US\$ in mainland China.

It is not clear whether the investigation and interrogation will lead to charges.

In July 2017, 2 days after the seizure of 7 t of raw ivory in a 40-foot container from Malaysia (see "On the Trail" n°18 p. 97), 3 people working in an import-export company were arrested and ultimately released for lack of sufficient evidence of their guilt. Since then, the investigation has been at a standstill.<sup>7</sup>

## INDIA

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

December 8 and 11, 2018

**Ambadiha, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha State, India**

The Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch raided the village and arrested Balia Andhara Judia, Debendra Das, Janmenjay Naik and Raghunath Behera. They were in possession of 2 pangolins weighing a total of 13 kg. Locally, the pangolin scales are polished after being immersed in boiling water and then transformed into different types of amulets known to have healing properties. Three days later, a new raid made it possible to get hold of a 500 g tip of elephant tusk from Agnisar Nayak (50 years old). His 2 brothers, Pratak (48 years old) and Lalmohan alias Chaianya alias Manhoman (45 years old) were also arrested, as well as several accomplices: Keshab Dehuri (50 years old), Gopinath Nayak (49 years old) and Nakula Dehuri alias Sebakar (42 years old).<sup>8</sup>



## VIET NAM

### PLASTIC NETWORK

October 4, 2018

**Tien Sa Port, Da Nang Municipality, Viet Nam**

Record seizure of the year in Viet Nam. A Maersk container unloaded on September 29 from the *Lindavia* (under Liberian flag) and coming from Nigeria contained 6 tons of pangolin scales and 2 tons of ivory.



It was declared to contain plastic waste but the customs officers at the port did not let themselves be deceived. They first scanned the container and then began the search in the afternoon, ending late at night. There were 200 bags of garbage camouflaging 200 bags of scales and tusks cut into pieces. The recipient declared on the manifest is Thien Truong Su Co, Ltd. located in the town of Nghia Xuan, Nghe An Province, but no one has come to collect the container. The investigation is ongoing. The owner of the *Lindavia* is German. He hastened to send his ship to Bangladesh for demolition. Sold for 440 US\$/t, the *Lindavia*, 10,332 t, was stranded in Chattogram on February 3, 2019.<sup>9</sup>



January 25, 2019

**Lach Huyen Port, Municipality of Haiphong, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 1.5 t of pangolin scales and 500 kg of raw ivory in containers carrying wood, according to the accompanying documents. The containers were from Apapa, Nigeria. Under logs were hidden wooden crates closed by chains containing the prohibited "goods." The recipient of the container was VIC Thanh Binh Import-Export Co., Ltd. This is the largest seizure made in Haiphong in recent years.<sup>10</sup>



Felines and Elephants p. 94  
Rhinoceroses p.100  
Rhinoceroses and Elephants p.111  
Elephants p.112

# Primates

Gorilla (*Gorilla* spp.), chimpanzee (*Pan* spp.), orangutan (*Pongo* spp.) are listed in CITES Appendix I. Macaques (*Macaca* spp.) are in Appendix II except the lion-tailed macaque (*Macaca silenus*) and the Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*) listed in Appendix I. Baboons (*Papio* spp.) are listed in Appendix II.

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**Early October 2018**  
**Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Common cruelty! A skinned baboon (Cercopithecidae, Appendix I or II) was hung on the clothesline of a home in the city of Port Shepstone (35,000 inhabitants).<sup>1</sup>



### CAMEROON

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**  
**24 January 2019**  
**Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon**

Rescue of a baby chimpanzee from the clutches of a man who acknowledges being an old hand in the sale of great apes. He is assisted in this role by his wife and one of his sons based in the European Union. The survivor is in the hands of the Sanaga Yong Sanctuary.<sup>2</sup>



### GABON

**November 2018**  
**Batéké Plateau National Park, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon. Border with the Republic of Congo.**

Three young gorillas, one male and 2 females, had been rescued by the Aspinall Foundation. Two of them are orphans of poaching. Today, bound by family and hierarchical solidarity, they have just been released in Gabon in the Batéké Plateau National Park thanks to the good care of the foundation.<sup>3</sup>



Rapha, the group leader, explores his new habitat.

### LIBERIA

**End of November 2018**  
**Liberia**

Rescue of 4 chimpanzees in 3 days by Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency, Liberia National Police and Forestry Development Authority. The shelter is overcrowded, others must be built! The LCRP is seeking funding. Two of the survivors had been chained for years. A male about 13 years old is the size of a 6-year-old kid.<sup>4</sup>



**Mid-December 2018  
Near Sapo National Park, Liberia**

Seizure of a chimpanzee attached to a pole in a village near the Sapo national park. He was destined for a market in the city. The park attracts many poachers. Access is facilitated by the presence of mining activities.<sup>5</sup>



**MALAWI**

**End of November 2018  
Senga, Central Region, Malawi**

Rescue by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust of 2 baboons pets. They were chained to beaten earth.<sup>6</sup>



**REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**FAMILY AFFAIRS  
December 14, 2018  
Impfondo, Likouala Department,  
Republic of the Congo**

Wilibona and Richard Ngombé, of the Central African Republic, arrested in July in possession of 13 gorilla parts, have been found guilty. They were each sentenced to 3 years in prison, 200,000 francs CFA (350 US\$) in fines and one million francs CFA (1750 US\$) in damages.<sup>7</sup>



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**Early October 2018  
Itebero, North Kivu Province, Democratic  
Republic of the Congo**



In a basket of braided vines lies a L'Hoest's monkey (*Cercopithecus lhoesti*, Appendix II). He has been removed from the poachers' hands by the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature.<sup>8</sup>

**End of October 2018  
Lwiro, South Kivu Province, Democratic Republic  
of the Congo**

New arrival at the Lwiro primate shelter: a 9-months-old chimpanzee baby and a baboon baby of about the same age. Transfer carried out with the assistance of Virunga National Park and its pilot. "Behind every orphan, there is a tragedy."<sup>9</sup>



**January 2019  
Kisangani, Tshopo Province, Democratic  
Republic of Congo**

Release of 2 young chimpanzees chained in a house. They will first be placed under observation in Lwiro's shelter.<sup>10</sup>

AMERICA

**ARGENTINA**

**Mid-December 2018  
Córdoba, Province of Córdoba, Argentina**

Seizure of a common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) approximately 2 months old from a private property. The animal was transferred to the city zoo for prognosis. He's the fourth of his kind to be saved from domestic captivity in the last 2 months.<sup>11</sup>



**Late January 2019**

**Junin, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina**

Rescue of a howler monkey (*Alouatta* spp., Appendix I ou II) from a private property.<sup>12</sup>

**BRAZIL**

**November 1, 2018**

**Jardim do Mulato, Piauí State, Brazil**

Rescue of 2 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) captive in a private home.<sup>13</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**November 7, 2018**

**São José do Rio Preto, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

A man and a woman were each sentenced to 14,000 real (3800 US\$) in fines for abusing and transporting 4 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonym for *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II), aged one to 2 months. It was the 7<sup>th</sup> time that the woman has been caught red-handed.<sup>14</sup>



**Early December 2018**

**Praia Grande, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Seizure of a common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) concealed in a brick of milk and being sold for the equivalent of 1,500 US\$. The 2 vendors aged 18 and 30 were officially reported and released pending trial for trafficking in protected animals and abuse.<sup>15</sup>



**ECUADOR**

**December 2018**

**La Concordia, Province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Ecuador**

Rescue and adoption by the Washu refuge located in Guayas of a female brown-headed spider monkey (*Ateles fusciceps*, Appendix II) who had escaped from a domestic household. Since the beginning of the year, the province's environmental department has seized 200 wild animals. Most of them are birds.<sup>16</sup>

**PERU**

**Mid-October 2018**

**Huancayo, Junin Department, Peru**

Common cruelty! Rescue by the Serfor of a white-fronted capuchin (*Cebus albifrons*, Appendix II) tied to a wall. Transfer to Colpar-Quilcas Zoo.<sup>17</sup>

**ASIA**

**CAMBODIA**

**January 12, 2019**

**Cardamom National Park, Cambodia**

Attempted poaching of 2 monkeys. She turned short when the guards arrived. They were informed by trap cameras placed on the usual poachers' tracks. The Cardamom national park is home to pileated gibbons (*Hylobates pileatus*, Appendix I).<sup>18</sup>

**January 30, 2019**

**Chhay Areng, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia**

Rescue of a trapped slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I).<sup>19</sup>



**CHINA**

**End of October 2018**

**Pu'Er, Yunnan Province, China**

A baby northern pig-tailed macaque was transferred to a specialized shelter after being rescued from trafficking by 2 residents and the police. 21 cm high, weighing 1,100 g, he is unable to survive on his own in the wild.<sup>20</sup>



**INDIA**

**December 30, 2018**

**West Garo Hills District, Meghalaya State, India**



Killing, cooking, eating a rhesus macaque and sharing it on Facebook. The culprit is a 20-year-old student.<sup>21</sup>

## INDONESIA

**October 8, 2018**

### **Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, Lampung Province, Indonesia**

Progressive release in Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park of an albino Sunda slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) that was used as a pet and decorative object for a Lampung resident. Since the end of August 2018, he was under survey and relearning food autonomy and survival instincts. It is remarkable that this exceptional specimen was not left to a zoo for display and exploitation throughout its life. In the 320,000 ha park, it will be as well as possible protected from poaching and will contribute, like its peers with brown fur, to flower pollination and insect control.<sup>22</sup>



**October 14, 2018**

### **Sampit, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

A slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) was voluntarily handed over to BKSDA by villagers. Precarious state. Lack of mobility. Agung Widodo fears that the population of slow lorises in the province is declining even though there has been no recent census.<sup>23</sup>

**October 23, 2018**

### **Gunung Cut, Southwest Aceh Reaency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

The ICO HOCRU Orangutan Information Centre) does not only deal with orangutans. Rescue of a white-handed gibbon (*Hylobates lar*, Appendix I) held in captivity for 6 years. Handed over to the BKSDA.<sup>24</sup>



**January 10, 2019**

### **Majalengka Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia**

Police seized 10 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) destined for shipment to China, in very poor condition, with bite wounds due to being crammed in plastic crates. One of them has an air gun bullet lodged deep in his skull. They are undergoing intensive treatment in the IAR (International Animal Rescue) and BKSDA shelters.<sup>25</sup>



**January 23, 2019**

### **Medan, North Sumatra Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia**

Sentencing of Herry Ginting to 2 years in prison and a fine of 690 US\$ for unlawful detention of 4 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 4 langurs (*Cercopithecidae*, Appendix I ou II), and 2 long-tailed macaques. He was selling on Facebook.<sup>26</sup>



## INDONESIA - ORANGUTANS

**October 9, 2018**

### **Mount Leuser, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A female of about 25 years and her baby of about 1 year and a half were evacuated from a palm oil plantation and were later released on Mount Leuser. Joint intervention by BKSDA and GLNP (Gunung Leuser National Park).<sup>27</sup>



**October 14, 2018**

**Baamang, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

BKSDA received several testimonies about an orangutan eating pineapples in a communal orchard. When they arrived on the scene, the agents did not locate the intruder. "Due to the lack of available natural habitat, not only orangutans but also sun bears are entering private gardens," says the local BKSDA official.<sup>28</sup>

**October 15, 2018**

**Pulo Tiga, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A female about 20 years old, 4 months pregnant. Gestation lasts 9 months. Evacuated from a rubber plantation soon to be converted into a palm oil plantation. Released immediately in the Leuser ecosystem. "The soon to be born infant will be taking the first breath on freedom as well." Joint intervention by the HOCRU (Human Orangutan Conflict Response Unit) of the Orangutan Information Centre and the BKSDA of Aceh.<sup>29</sup>

**October 15, 2018**

**Santiung, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia**

An orphaned baby female orangutan extracted from a palm oil plantation. Two airgun bullets in the body. Her mother is missing.<sup>30</sup>



**October 19, 2018**

**Blang Balok, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A female about 12 years old, 25kg, evacuated from a plantation. She had escaped from the cage she was kept in as a pet. She had been living on the plantation for over a year.<sup>31</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

**Blang Balok, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

"Two days ago BKSDA received several calls about an orangutan taking refuge in a palm oil plantation. Observers noted that he was far enough from the houses to be evacuated without difficulty. "He was transferred to the Batu Mbelin rehabilitation centre. He's a male in his twenties."<sup>32</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

**Gunung Cut, Southwest Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

The OIC HOCRU's are tireless! About 25 years old, 65 kg, exfiltrated from an agricultural plot, this new survivor was found in good physical condition and was immediately introduced into the Leuser Mountains.<sup>33</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

**Tepian Baru, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

Age: 4 to 5 years old. Distinctive sign: amputation of the little toe on the right foot. General state: disturbing. Main habitat: a wooden box.



To come: a quarantine of about 2 months, a forest school to learn to live in the wild again and to eat something other than eggs and cooked rice, and at the end of a long process, if possible, release.<sup>34</sup>



**October 26, 2018**

**Tanjung Pura, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

He had gotten into the habit of coming back again and again to an orchard to eat fruit. At about 20 years, he was anaesthetized, examined by veterinarians and transported to Gunung Palung National Park. The director is concerned: "Already this year 3 wild orangutans have been translocated into the GPNP area. We believe in the future more and more orangutans will need to be brought here owing to conflicts caused by the fragmentation of orangutan habitat. For the time being, we are able to provide support for translocated orangutans. But there will be a limit as to how many animals the area can sustain."<sup>35</sup>



**November 9, 2018**  
**Pulau Tiga, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

An airgun bullet in the left eye. Despite this disability, the female is in good shape. She was extracted from the plantation and released the same day in the Leuser.<sup>36</sup>

**November 22, 2018**  
**Pulo Paya, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

35 years old, about 80 kg. Trapped in the local palm oil plantation. A sharp weapon wound and airgun bullets in the body. After the emergency treatment, he was immediately returned to the Leuser Forest.<sup>37</sup>



**November 27, 2018**  
**Ganepo, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

A 30-year-old male orangutan, weighing 88 kg was rescued in a small village.<sup>38</sup>

**December 12, 2018**  
**Rihtengah, Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia**

The head of an orangutan about a year old and other parts of the dismembered animal were located by the police and an OIC team within a 100 metre radius of the house of the alleged owner. The man is on the run.<sup>39</sup>

**December 19, 2018**  
**Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, Central Kalimantan and West Kalimantan Provinces, Indonesia**

After a perilous journey of more than 16 hours by road and river, Alba, the female albino orangutan aged about 5 years (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 47) accompanied by Kika, another female saved from capture in February 2017, were released into Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park by the BOS Foundation teams (Borneo Orangutan Survival).<sup>40</sup>



**December 30, 2018**  
**Ujung Mangki, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A 35-year-old orangutan was evacuated from a palm oil plantation. He was in good health and released the same day in the Leuser forest.<sup>41</sup>

**January 15, 2019**  
**Titi Poban, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Rescue of an adult orangutan about 30 years old, 90 kg, shut away in an oil palm plantation. It was decided to release him immediately in the Singkil Swamp Wildlife Reserve. Collective action by villagers and teams from OIC, BKSDA and FKL (Forum Konservasi Leuser).<sup>42</sup>



January 22, 2019

**Manggeng, Southwest Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

SOS (Sumatran Orangutan Society) rescued a 6-month-old orangutan, fed rice and other domestic foods and locked in a chicken cage.<sup>43</sup>



January 23, 2019

**Suka Makmur, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Rescue by an ICO team of an orangutan about 2 years old. Victim of a fever. Under treatment.<sup>44</sup>



## THAILAND

January 15, 2019

**Khao Noi, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand**

Rescue of a male gibbon (Hylobatidae, Appendix I) on the side of the road. Aged 5 or 6 years old and having been domesticated, he does not have his food autonomy. It was entrusted to the Huay Sai Wildlife Sanctuary.<sup>45</sup>

## VIET NAM

October 2, 2018

**Long Bien District, Hanoi, Viet Nam**

A passer-by filmed the scene and notified the Education for Nature - Vietnam hotline. A macaque was held in a cage left on a sidewalk. When the agents of the Forest Protection Department came to seize him, the cage had disappeared. But a second visit was successful. The monkey was transferred to the Wildlife Rescue Centre at Soc Son.<sup>46</sup>

October 4, 2018

**Lam Dong Province, Central Highlands Region, Viet Nam**

Rescue of a slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) locked in a cage outside a restaurant to attract the attention of customers. Following an ENV alert, the province's Environmental Police seized it. The little primate should be released into the forest.<sup>47</sup>



October 17, 2018

**Hai Phong Municipality, Red River Delta Region, Viet Nam**

Two white-cheeked gibbons (*Nomascus leucogenys*, Appendix I) were released after about 10 years of detention in a villa. It is once again thanks to a call on the ENV hotline that a raid was carried out by the Environmental Police and the province's Forest Protection Department accompanied by the local police. The 2 unfortunate victims are now in recovery in the Endangered Primate Rescue Centre in Cuc Phong National Park.<sup>48</sup>

October 18, 2018

**Cao Bang Province, Viet Nam**

Holding a 25 kg brown macaque in a cage is particularly stupid and dangerous. His captor finally understood this when the cercopithecus bit him. He then decided to get rid of him by calling the ENV hotline. The Forest Protection Department came to take charge of the animal and had him examined by a veterinarian. He can be released into the wild.<sup>49</sup>

**October 2018**

**Hanoi, Viet Nam**

After buying a loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I or II) in Son La province to save him from the cooking pot, a woman brought him back to the capital city and contacted ENV. He joined the Hanoi Wildlife Rescue Centre in Soc Son.<sup>50</sup>

**Early November 2018**

**Da Nang, Da Nang Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure and release of a pig-tailed macaque that was being held in a dirty cage.<sup>51</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Nha Trang, Khanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure and release of a long-tailed macaque held captive by a private individual.<sup>52</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Mid-November 2018**

**Bac Giang, Bac Giang Province, Viet Nam**



An investigation is under way after a secondary school student tried to sell a pig-tailed macaque on Facebook. According to the student, "his father caught the monkey accidentally and wanted to sell him because he did not want to take care of him".<sup>53</sup>

**December 20, 2018**

**Nam Dinh Province, Viet Nam**

Two pig-tailed macaques escaped their death, scheduled by a medicine man who intended to skin them to use their bones in traditional preparations on the occasion of the Vietnamese New Year's Day, Tet. The authorities were alerted and were able to seize them before their massacre. They are now at the Hanoi Wildlife Rescue Center in Soc Son.<sup>54</sup>

**December 24, 2018**

**Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam**



A real man meal: eating a douc langur (*Pygathrix* spp., Appendix I). Such was the whim of these 6 morons aged 35 to 59 years. They posted the pictures on social networks. The monkey had been bought for the equivalent of 50 US\$ from a poacher. The species is endangered. They were arrested a month after their banquet.<sup>55</sup>

**January 8, 2019**

**Xuân Liên, Thanh Hóa Province, Viet Nam**

Voluntary hand over of a pig-tailed macaque and a long-tailed macaque of 7kg and 3kg. They were entrusted to the Xuan Lien shelter.<sup>56</sup>

**January 15, 2019**

**Municipality of Da Nang, Viet Nam**

Rescue of a stump-tailed macaque discarded in a cage in a bus station.<sup>57</sup>

**24 January 2019**

**Binh Dinh Province, Viet Nam**

Freeing of a small red-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*, Appendix I). He had just been caught in a trap. A witness called the ENV (Education for Nature - Vietnam) hotline. 1800 1522.<sup>58</sup>



**EUROPE**

**SPAIN**

**December 12, 2018**

**Port of Almeria, Province of Almería, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**

Disembarkment of car ferries from Morocco. Seizure of a Barbary macaque, more or less hidden under the backseat of a car. Under an agreement in effect since 2014 covering the ports of Alicante, Almeria and Algeciras, the small stowaway was handed over to the Netherlands-based AAP Primadomus Foundation, which has a primate shelter in Spain.<sup>59</sup>



**Early January 2019**

**Elche, Alicante Province, Valencian Community, Spain**

Attempt to dismantle a sales network for marmosets (*Callitrichidae*, Appendix I ou II) in the provinces of Alicante, Murcie, and Elche. At least 67 primates were sold by 25 people.<sup>60</sup>

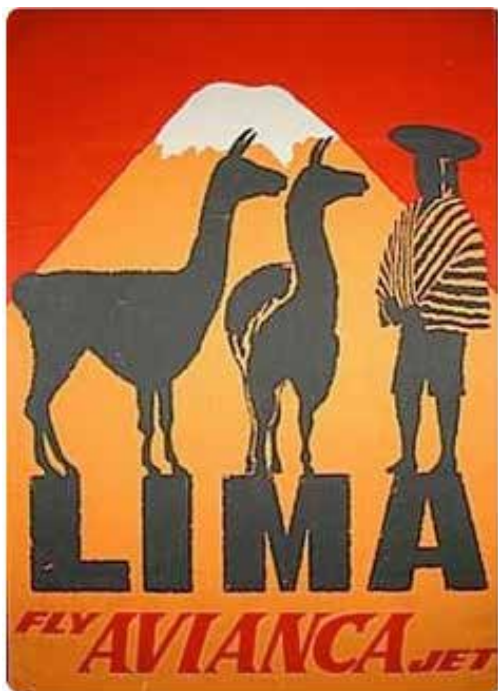
## FRANCE

January 2019

Paris, France

Facial surgery for the owner of an adult long-tailed macaque. He was smuggled in 15 years ago from Indonesia. He lived in Paris for a long time. The macaque was seized and entrusted to the Dutch foundation AAP via the French NGO "30 million d'Amis".<sup>61</sup>

## Vicuñas and Guanacos



AMERICA

## ARGENTINA

Mid-November 2018

Sierra Grande, Río Negro Province, Argentina

- Seizure of 120 kg of guanaco meat (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) at a roadblock

- Search of a suspect vehicle on Route 3. Discovery of a dead guanaco, a live guanaco baby, a firearm and hunting knives.

Along with vicuñas, guanacos are the only wild camelids in South America. Guanaco wool is considered a strategic resource for the social economy in Patagonia and poaching of the species is prohibited, as is poaching of vicuña in the north of the country.<sup>1</sup>



Mid-November 2018

Tinogasta, Catamarca Province, Argentina

Seizure of 30 kg of meat, 6 vicuña pelts (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II), shotguns and ammunition in a van intercepted on National Road 60.<sup>2</sup>



Late January, 2019

Near Valcheta, Río Negro Province, Argentina

Seizure of 4 skinned guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) during a roadside check. Guanaco hunting is prohibited. It is an important diet of pumas. The province is seeking to promote wool shearing as a renewable source. This involves capturing, mowing, and releasing guanacos, a practice already applied to vicuñas.<sup>3</sup>

## BOLIVIA

October 3, 2018

Colcha "K" and San Juan, Potosí Department, Bolivia

- Three vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) poached. Surrounded by motorcycles and sheared.  
- 17 poached and sheared vicuñas. A pursuer's car was set on fire by poachers.<sup>4</sup>

## PERU

Early October 2018

Puquio and Carmen Salcedo Districts, Lucanas Province, Ayacucho Department, Peru

Discovery of 19 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) poached and sheared.<sup>5</sup>

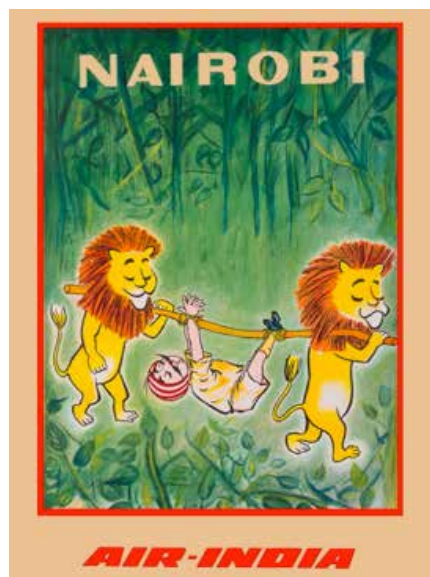


Early December 2018

San Pedro District, Lucanas Province, Ayacucho Region, Peru

New poaching. 14 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II). Once again, farmers complain about the absence of guards and the lack of logistics to defend themselves against looters. No emergency plan to reduce these criminal acts. The press says that poachers take advantage of the "chaccus" season. While government services and cooperatives are shearing vicuñas with the assistance of herdsman and their families, poachers are getting busy.<sup>6</sup>

# Felines



**“On the Trail” n°23  
The value of felines or felines parts on the black market,  
according to media or official sources**

Continent	Country	Animal/part	US\$	Ref.
Africa	South Africa	5 raw leopard skins	2,090	1
Asia	India	4 leopard canines	344	5
		Leopard skin	13,580	7
		Leopard skin	14,000	25
		Tiger skin	2,750 - 64,400	57
		Tiger skin	35,000	72

## LIONS

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

AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**October 1, 2018  
Rustenburg Park, North West Province, South Africa**

Five lions were found dead in their enclosure, one of them with his 4 paws and head torn off. All the lions were poisoned but the poachers were probably interrupted by the guards before they could skin them all. All 4 paws were found abandoned in a bag near the park. Two rewards are offered, one of 100,000 rand (7,000 US\$) from the park and one of 10,000 rand (700 US\$) from a private company.<sup>36</sup>



### Early October 2018

**Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Appeal by the National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NCSPCA) to the Supreme Court concerning the increase in lion skeleton export permits from 800 to 1,500.<sup>37</sup>

### December 10, 2018

**South Africa**

Two lions were found poisoned in a pen, with their paws, tail and jaw cut off. A third died poisoned shortly after. He was not mutilated.<sup>38</sup>



### KENYA

**October 22, 2018**

**Jomo-Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

Arrest of Truong Trung Hieu, a Vietnamese national heading from Liberia to Thailand, for illegally possessing 8 lion teeth, 3 lion claws and 3 warthog teeth, hidden in a thermos flask and wrapped in foil.<sup>39</sup>



## LIONS - FOLLOWED

**Mid-January 2019**  
**Near Ol Kinyei Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

Surgical operation of a lion. Arrowhead stuck in a shoulder.<sup>40</sup>



## TANZANIA

**January 12, 2019**  
**Magombwe, Iringa region, Tanzania**

A tram from the Ruaha Carnivore Project managed to convince young herdsman from the Barabaig tribe not to kill a lion that had attacked one of their cows.<sup>41</sup>

## AMERICA

## MEXICO

**October 1, 2018**  
**Tijuana International Airport, State of Baja California, Mexico**

Discovery of a female lion cub about 2 months old in a wooden box from the city of León. The papers presented by the airline company were not in order and the scan of the chip did not identify the lion cub's origin. She has been entrusted to the Attorney General services.<sup>42</sup>



**December 17, 2018**  
**Colima, Colima State, Mexico**

Voluntary surrender of a female lion cub aged about 5 months by a man who claims to have found her wandering in the town of Tecoman, 50 km from Colima. She will be given to a UMA (Unidad de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre).<sup>43</sup>

## EUROPE

## FRANCE

**October 23, 2018**  
**Valenton, Val de Marne Department, France**

Discovery of a 1.5-months-old female lion cub in an apartment. The buyer is a 30-year-old man known to the police for multiple offences, who reportedly found the lion cub "adorable."<sup>44</sup>

**October 24, 2018**  
**Marseille, Bouches du Rhône Department, France**

Discovery of a female lion cub about 1 to 2 months old, not yet weaned, in a car garage in the 14th arrondissement of Marseille. She was welcomed by the organization Tonga Terre d'accueil, based at the Saint-Martin la Plaine Zoo in the Loire Department.<sup>45</sup>



**November 12, 2018**  
**Paris, Île de France Region, France**

Discovery of a lion cub in a Lamborghini parked on the Champs-Élysées. The driver of the car was arrested and taken into custody.<sup>46</sup>



## LIONS - FOLLOWED

### NETHERLANDS

**October 7, 2018**

**Tienhoven, Province of Utrecht, Netherlands**

Discovery in a field of a caged lion cub of about 5 months.<sup>47</sup>



### RUSSIA

**Early November 2018**

**Smolenschina, Irkutsk Oblast, Russia**

A lion was abandoned by a man who had won it at cards. Rachitic, he was only fed with canned dog food.<sup>48</sup>

### UKRAINE

**November 8, 2018**

**Odessa, Odessa Oblast, Ukraine**

A video shows a lion cub on the loose on a posh street in Odessa. We do not know what happened to the animal.<sup>49</sup>



**November 20, 2018**

**Ukraine / Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Repatriation of 4 lions from Ukraine to Kragga Kamma Park. The first had been confiscated from a tamer and the other 3 removed from a private zoo.<sup>50</sup>

## LEOPARDS

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

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

**January 17, 2019**

**Malelane, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Seized in 2 maize bags carried by Anna Mathonsi of 5 raw leopard skins worth approximately 2090 US\$. The felines had been poached in Kruger Park or adjacent hunting reserves. The trafficker's release pending trial is conditional on the payment of a 2,000 rand (140 US\$) bail.<sup>1</sup>

#### GUINEA

**December 1, 2018**

**Dabola, Faranah Region, Guinea**

Sâa Tawta Millimouno is remanded in custody for the detention, transport and selling of a leopard skin. Two hunters, with the complicity of a high-ranking officer of the "Corps des Conservateurs", shot down a leopard in the same region in April 2018 (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 56).<sup>2</sup>

#### ZAMBIA

**Mid-November 2018**

**Lundazi, Eastern Province, Zambia. Border with Malawi.**

Sentence of Derrick Nyirenda, 44 years old, to 5 years' imprisonment with hard labour for illegally possessing a leopard skin.<sup>3</sup>



### ASIA

#### BANGLADESH

**December 22, 2018**

**Daulatpur, Panchagarh District, Rangpur Division, Bangladesh**

Despite the presence of a police patrol, a leopard was lynched in the middle of a crowd of several thousand people in the late afternoon. The animal had been spotted from 11:30 a.m. and had taken refuge in a ditch covered with vegetation. The inhabitants gathered around him and gave him no chance. They believed that the cat came from neighbouring India, which must not have helped his case. Touhidul Bari Babu, district chairman of the community environmental protection organization Paribesh Parishad, criticizes the authorities who had, in his opinion, enough time to save the animal.<sup>4</sup>

## LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

### INDIA

#### REPEATED OFFENSE

**October 4, 2018**

**Puranpur, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Forest rangers from the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve have set a trap for Data Ram and Jaswant. Informed that the 2 men had feline canine teeth, they entrusted Deputy range Officer Arif Jamal with the task of posing as a buyer. He made a deal by advancing 10% of the 25,000 rupees (344 US\$) planned for the sale of 4 canines 5 to 7 cm long and gave the 2 men an appointment in town for delivery. They were arrested this Thursday afternoon. The duo reportedly killed a leopard or discovered its carcass 10 months ago in the Bhira forest on the outskirts of the reserve. Data Ram had already served a prison sentence 7 years ago for killing a leopard, and Jaswant's father was also known for poaching.<sup>5</sup>

**October 20, 2018**

**Banaswadi, Bangalore District, Karnataka State, India**

Kumar was hoping to sell a leopard skin. He was ambushed after an indiscretion. Two accomplices have escaped, but the police are on their heels and are trying to find the weapon used to kill the feline that was reportedly poached in the Kakana Kote forest in the Heggadadevana Kote district.<sup>6</sup>

**November 2, 2018**

**Palghar District, Maharashtra State, India**

Arrest of Gajanan Desai (45 years old) and Arjun Tayade (47 years old) with a leopard skin estimated at about 100,000 rupees (13,580 US\$).<sup>7</sup>

**Early November 2018**

**Almora, Uttarakhand State, India**

Arrest of Diwan Singh, lawyer, for smuggling leopard skins. According to him and the Almora Bar Association, this is a police plot to discredit him.<sup>8</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

A leopard carcass was found with paw injuries. He was reportedly beaten to death, according to the autopsy.<sup>9</sup>

**Mid-November 2018**

**Kodigehalli, Karnataka State, India**

Arrest of Suresh (30 years old), Papanna (27 years old) and Basavaraj (48 years old) for poisoning a leopard and trying to sell his skin to a spiritual guide to wash away their sins.<sup>10</sup>



### GANG

**November 19, 2018**

**Khargone district, Madhya Pradesh State, India**

Arrest of Shiva, alias Shiva Baba, and Dhannalal Barkale with 2 paws, 4 claws and other parts of a leopard.<sup>11</sup>

**November 26, 2018**

**Cuttack, Odisha State, India**

Arrest of Ichhananda Jani (30 years old) with the skin of a leopard killed at least a year ago.<sup>12</sup>



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**December 1, 2018**

**Aamby Valley, Pune District, Maharashtra State, India**

Four teams of 6 forestry officers systematically search for and remove traps in and around the forests of Visakhar and Devghar villages. The campaign follows the death of a leopard about a year and a half old, weighing 45 to 50 kg, caught in a trap. His screams had caught the public's attention.

A speeding car collided with a female about 2 years old who managed to finish crossing the road and died at the Manikdoh shelter.<sup>13</sup>



**December 2, 2018**

**Nellimalam, Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India**

Death of a female about 2 years old in a collar trap designed to catch wild boars in a rubber plantation. Residents discovered her carcass in the afternoon and notified the Forest Department. The feline had wounds on her neck and around her body. Suneesh (32 years old) and an accomplice suspected of setting the trap and then moving the body were arrested. A complaint was to be filed by the administration against the owner of the plantation.<sup>14</sup>



**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**December 10, 2018**

**Bhavnagar, Bhavnagar District and Pania, Amreli District, Gujarat State, India**

The forestry administration today released the findings of the forensic expert report on the seizures made last Friday and Saturday. Danabhai Devayatabhai Garaniya (40 years old) was arrested on Friday evening in Bhavnagar while trying to sell 4 leopard claws (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) to an informant in the Forest Department by making them look like Asian lion claws (*Panthera leo persica*, Appendix I). During his interrogation, he had revealed the name of his supplier, Kanubhai Vala (26 years old). A search the next day at Vala's home in Pania revealed 11 other cat claws. Analyses showed that 8 claws were those of Asian lion and 7 of leopard. The village where Vala lives is on the edge of the Gir forest and the man has good relations with forestry employees and trackers. Within the Forest Department, some suspect that forest rangers are involved in trafficking. Deputy Forest Conservator Sandeep Kumar recalls that Kanubhai Vala had already been involved in the sale of claws 4 or 5 years ago.<sup>15</sup>

**December 18, 2018**

**Jhothra, Churu District, Rajasthan State, India**

Panic and collective hysteria spread in the village of about 2,400 inhabitants when a two-and-a-half-year-old leopard broke into the village and would have attacked humans and stray animals. The cat would have mutilated 2 people. His crazy run lasted 2 hours, at the end of which a crowd cornered him and beat him to death with axes, bamboo sticks and stones. A wildlife protector accused the Forest Department of not having set up watering points and hunting grounds for leopards when their population is growing locally.<sup>16</sup>

**December 18, 2018**

**Yellapur, Uttara Kannada District, Karnataka State, India**

Arrest by the Criminal Investigation Department forest unit of Syed Ateeq (40 years old), Guru Prasad (25 years old) and Kumar (25 years old) as they were about to deliver a skin to a buyer. An informant reported them. The leopard was reportedly poached a few months ago in the Yellapur forest.<sup>17</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**December 19, 2018**

**Gondia District, Maharashtra State, India**

The case is sensitive. Bhimsen Dongarwar Patil (40 years old) belongs to a family whose ancestors had the rank of Malgujars (or zamindars), a princely aristocracy with vast agricultural estates. His grandfather, Mahadeoro Dongarwar Patil, was instrumental in the creation of Navegaon National Park, now part of the Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve. His unworthy grandson was arrested today for killing a 2-year-old female leopard on the night of December 14-15, cutting off all 4 paws and throwing the body into the forest near the village of Kelwad. The accompanying farm worker, Hemjaj Meshram, was also arrested. Bhimsen Dongarwar Patil denies the facts, but Hemjaj Meshram confessed. When they met the cat on a road they dazzled her with a flashlight and Bhimsen killed her with a 12-gauge rifle. A search of his home led to the seizure of a trophy of sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*). According to a local NGO, Bhimsen has long been selling poached animal parts, but so far the authorities had turned a blind eye due to his family's respectability. The 2 men appeared on December 20 and were held in police custody for 14 days. The Times of India reports political pressure on the forestry administration to cover up the case. Eventually Bhimsen Dongarwar Patil and Hemjaj Meshram were released on "lack of evidence". The park rangers had forgotten to seize the rifle..<sup>18</sup>

**December 24, 2018**

**Kottur, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh State, India**

The leopard is said to have attacked goats for about 2 weeks around the village. After being trapped in a boar trap, he was beaten to death by a small group of villagers. The lynching scenes were immortalized by selfies. A man was arrested. The others are on the run.<sup>19</sup>



**December 31, 2018**

**Tandulwani, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Found along the side of the road between Katol and Murti, 65 km from Nagpur, a leopard skin stuffed in a bag.<sup>20</sup>

**January 6, 2019**

**Koylari, Gondiya District, Maharashtra State, India**

Lynching of a leopard cub. The forestry agents tried everything to save him. Despite the intensive care, he died the next day. 3 in police custody. No news from the mother.<sup>28</sup>

## LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

**January 11, 2019**

**Pavijetpur, Chhota Udaipur district, State of Gujarat, India**

Arrest of Hindu Rathwa (56 years old). He is suspected of the death of a female leopard found decapitated, paws and tail cut off.<sup>21</sup>

**January 13, 2019**

**Calcutta, State of West Bengal, India**

Grasping of a leopard skin 2m30 long and 62cm wide. Arrest of Saurav Das and Tapabrata Majumdar attempted marketing.<sup>22</sup>



**January 14, 2019**

**Mancherial Forest, Mancherial District, Telangana State, India**

Forests are infested by poachers. Strangulation of the leopard in a trap built with bicycle brake cables. The carcass with a deadly smell was spotted by wood collectors. The claws were still in place.



A tracking dog followed the prints. A young man was arrested. He admitted the facts and gave the names of 5 accomplices. They are all held in police custody for 14 days.<sup>29</sup>

**January 15, 2019**

**Mamidipally, Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh State, India**

Discovery of a new leopard carcass. Claws and teeth were pulled out. Four suspects were reportedly remanded in custody after being forced out of hiding by the canine brigade.<sup>30</sup>

**January 18, 2019**

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

Seizure of a 1.60m long skin. Arrest of 2 Nepalese men, Mr. Pokharel and Mr. Pradhan. Their intention was to smuggle it from Nepal to Bangladesh.<sup>23</sup>



**January 19, 2019**

**Palampur, Kangra District, Himachal Pradesh State, India**

Discovery of the carcass of a leopard killed by bullets. In 2 years, 4 other leopards have been poached in the district, especially in winter when they come down from the snow-covered mountains to feed in the hills.<sup>24</sup>

**January 20, 2019**

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

A pack of 5 bad fellows tried to sell a 3 m long fresh leopard skin for the equivalent of about 14,000 US\$. It was hidden in a school bag. One of the men is a guide in the Gorumara forest. Ranjit Mohanta and his accomplices had trapped the cat in a tea plantation adjacent to the Dooars forest near the border with Bhutan.<sup>25</sup>

**January 26, 2019**

**Udaipur, Udaipur District, Rajasthan State, India**

A leopard injured after a collision with a car approaches a village. He is believed to have bitten an old man. He was beaten and stoned. Half conscious, he was doused with kerosene and the crowd set fire to him. The police found ashes and bones at the scene.<sup>25bis</sup>

**January 31, 2019**

**Falakata, Alipurduar District, West Bengal State, India**

Lynching of a leopard with bamboos and other edged weapons near a tea plantation. He had approached the village while a rumor was spreading in the area about the death of 3 children attacked by a leopard. The crowd left him for dead. Forest officers who arrived on the scene but were unable to stop the cruelty injected him with sedatives. He died some time later.<sup>26</sup>

## NEPAL

**October 15, 2018**

**Kathmandu, Province No. 3, Nepal**

Arrest of Anmol Tamang (26 years old), Mohan Singh Rokaya (22 years old) and a minor under 16 years old by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) following information. The 3 men had arrived in the capital to sell a leopard skin. The trophy was seized and the traffickers handed over to the forestry administration.<sup>27</sup>

## EUROPE

## NETHERLANDS

**Early November 2018**

**Netherlands**

Seizure of a leopard skin in a traveller's luggage.<sup>31</sup>

## CHEETAHS

### AFRICA

#### SOMALIA

**October 2018**

##### Somalia

Seizure of 3 cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I) by the police. They were destined for the pet market of the United Arab Emirates. Two of them did not survive the abuse, the third, a female in critical condition, was cared for and rescued by the Aspinal Foundation.<sup>33</sup>



### ASIA

#### IRAN

**November 20, 2018**  
**Tehran Province, Iran**

Convictions of 4 traffickers specializing in the capture of cheetahs. 3 of them were fined 20 million rials (480 US\$) and the fourth 10 million rials (240 US\$).<sup>34</sup>



## SERVAL

### AFRICA

#### ZAMBIA

**Mid-January 2019**  
**Solwezi, North-Western Province, Zambia**

Sentence of Jonas Kalima (48 years old) to a fine of 7,600 US\$ or 3 years' imprisonment in the event of non-payment for illegal detention of the skin of a serval (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II).<sup>35</sup>



## TIGERS

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

### AMERICA

#### MEXICO

**Early December 2018**

##### Mexico City, Mexico

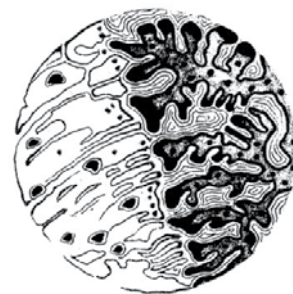
A female Siberian tiger aged 4 to 5 months was seized by PROFEPA from the courtyard of a restaurant. She's going to be transferred to an UMA.<sup>54</sup>



**January 11, 2019**

**San Nicolás de los Garza, State of Nuevo León, Mexico**

Seizure of a female Bengal tiger from private property. Aged about 2 to 3 months and weighing 10 kg, she was kept between 4 concrete walls 4.5m high.<sup>55</sup>



ASIA

CHINA

January 21, 2019

Yichun, Heilongjiang Province, China

A farmer reports a tiger in trouble in the Liushuhe forest. The camera images confirm that the tiger has lost a lot of its mobility. Open wounds are apparent. The possibility of a trap is not excluded. Expert veterinarians arrived from the Harbin Nature Park and Qiqihar Zoo and operated on site after anaesthetizing him.

The ambient temperature was -20°C. The Amur Tiger or Manchurian Tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I) was subsequently transferred to Harbin Park where it was placed under observation.<sup>56</sup>

INDIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

October 3, 2018

Yelwala, Mysore District, Karnataka State, India

Govinde Gowda was under the surveillance of the Forest Mobile Squad. A trap was set for him. He arrived at the meeting with his tiger skin, accompanied by 3 accomplices on 2 motorcycles. The forestry agents caught him but the other 3 were able to escape. The skin was in a gunny bag. Govinde Gowda confessed that he trapped the tiger last February in a coffee plantation near his fields and then moved the carcass into a forest to skin it. He then dried it at home with a halogen lamp. He was asking for 4,500,000 rupees (64,400 US\$) but claims that he would only have received 200,000 rupees (2,750 US\$), the rest going to accomplices. Govinde Gowda is not an amateur: he was already out on bail for skinning a leopard in 2010.<sup>57</sup>



© Deccan Chronicle

GANG

October 23, 2018

Haldina, Alwar District, Rajasthan State, India

The mystery of the disappearance of the tigress ST-5 is solved. She was last observed on February 21 with the male ST-11. A gang of poachers shot her at the end of February in the Sariska Tiger Reserve. They then dragged her 500 m to a more discreet place to cut her skin and pull out her teeth and claws. Sarfuddin Meo (30 years old), arrested today for poaching a Nilgaut antelope (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and a sambar (*Rusa unicolor*) confessed to shooting the tigress. He would have received a 20,000-rupees (275 US\$) share after the sale of the skin. He reported 5 accomplices. On October 29, Raes Meo (30 years old) was arrested. Sarfuddin reportedly gave him the claws and teeth, but they were not found. The other gang members are still at large. The case cost 3 forest rangers their jobs. The tiger reserve administration suspended for negligence Matadin Sharma, head of the Privthipura checkpoint, Ramjilal, responsible for monitoring the tiger's movements, and Janak Singh, head of search. They reportedly neither saw or heard anything during the poaching of ST-5 while they were about 500 m from the crime scene. But one of their colleagues discouraged by these sanctions points out that 500 m in a thick jungle is not a short distance, and that responsibility for the death of the tigress is collective.<sup>58</sup>

October 28, November 2 and 4, 2018

Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Bargarh District, Odisha State, India

Sahu, Mirdha, Bhoi and Tidu, from the village of Khajuria, were held in police custody for 2 days after confessing to poaching a Bengal tiger. He was found buried, beheaded with his teeth and claws torn off. The 4 men had kept the tiger's paws, claws and whiskers. They have since been seized.<sup>59</sup>



## TIGERS - FOLLOWED

**November 2, 2018**

**Yavatmal district, State of Maharashtra, India**



**The Avni (the Earth) Controversy**

The 16-year-old tigress was shot dead by professional hunters in the night of November 2 to 3, 2018. She had been hunted since the beginning of the year. 13 human victims are attributed to her, according to rumors. Her DNA was found on 5 corpses. She reportedly ate more than 60% of the people she attacked and thus reached the critical threshold of anthropophagy as defined by the State. The Supreme Court, which received a multitude of petitions, was called upon to rule on Avni's fate. It refused to favor an option specifying, however, that sight shooting – shoot to kill – should only be used as a last resort. NGOs and part of the public opinion wanted her to be captured and housed in a zoo. Aaditya Thackeray, leader of the youth branch of Shiv Sena, a nationalist party, said on social networks that "Avni had been the victim of a murder" and that "the Ministry of Forestry should be called the Ministry of Poaching." The administration's recruitment of Nawab Shafat Ali, a sniper and tiger hunter with 40 years experience, had been perceived by NGOs as a negative signal. The die was cast for Avni. The decision to shoot was made and the option of anesthesia with a hypodermic syringe shotgun was abandoned.

Avni had appeared in 2012 in the forest reserve of about 170 km<sup>2</sup>. Villagers are allowed access to collect firewood, graze herds or relieve themselves. They also claim the right to poach deer, which are the tigers' priority food source. Avni's supporters say she cannot be called a man-eater. The deaths attributed to her were all recorded in the forest. Avni did not approach or enter villages to marauder. For their part, some elders do recall that they were already there when the forest was declared a national park and highlight the right of precedence for themselves and their families. Avni may have arrived in the forest reserve from the Melghat Tiger Reserve 280 kilometers away. Around Yavatma, she met a lonely male. They made at least 2 tigers cubs together. They are 10 months old and are now orphans, and it is their fate that worries NGOs and biologists. As for Avni's skin, we don't know what happened to it.<sup>60</sup>

**November 4, 2018**

**Chaltua, Lakhimpur Khiri District, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

A tigress over 10 years old shot dead by villagers after killing a 50-year-old man. The male victim entered the reserve illegally and was assaulted. A dozen villagers entered the reserve, beat the guards and stole a tractor to surround and crush the tigress, which they then beat to death.<sup>61</sup>

**November 13, 2018**

**Satkosia Tiger Reserve, Odisha State, India**

Death of MB2, a tiger that arrived in Satkosia only 4 months ago, from the Kahna reserve in Madhya Pradesh. He was found with a deep back injury, probably caused by a metal trap, widely used by poachers in the area.<sup>62</sup>

**December 7, 2018**

**Lulka, Raisen District, Madhya Pradesh State, India**

Harchand (60 years old) is not a poacher. However, he was charged with "possession of an animal item, trophy or uncured trophy or meat derived from any wild animal" for cutting 2 paws off of a tigress near the Ratapani wildlife sanctuary. He had been notified on December 5 by 2 of his neighbours, Prahalad and Man Singh, of the discovery of the cat's carcass near their village. Harchand is a pious man. He did not take the 4 paws for fear of the wrath of the deities, felt guilty and cut only 2 paws with an axe, because local mythology says that tiger paws kept in an attic ensure that it will never be empty. For fear of human justice, he nevertheless buried them 2km away from the corpse, waiting for the investigation of the Forest Department to settle. Prahalad and Man Singh, on the other hand, kept boar and peacock organs in their homes. All 3 were arrested. An autopsy was ordered to determine the cause of death of the tigress.<sup>63</sup>

**December 7, 2018**

**Shettihalli, Nagarhole National Park, Karnataka State, India**

Rescue of an anesthetized tiger about 2 years old caught in a trap in the park's buffer zone. He was treated by veterinarians from the Balarama and Ganesh domestic elephant camps and then transported to the Koorgalli shelter. His roars had been heard by a lookout and he had been located in the early morning by forest officers rushing over on elephant's back.

Immediately afterwards, a trap detection and removal campaign was launched.<sup>64</sup>





## TIGERS - FOLLOWED

**December 8, 2018**

### **Satkosia Tiger Reserve, Angul District, Odisha State, India**

Mahavir, a 3-year-old male, was transferred on June 2, 2018 from Kanha National Park to Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha (700 km) in an effort to distribute the tigers among different habitats in India. Put in an enclosure, he had been "released" on July 6. His carcass was found on November 4. The autopsy revealed that he died of sepsis caused by the infection of a deep, sharp neck wound that is believed to have come from a trap and his successful efforts to get out of it. The autopsy was performed in the presence of an expert appointed by the NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority).<sup>65</sup>

## **GANG / REPEATED OFFENSE**

**December 28, 2018**

### **Kohora, Golaghat District, Assam State, India**

The sleuths in the Forest Department have picked up a good tip. Assisted by the police, they first stopped a vehicle on National Highway 37. Two men were transporting animal parts to Nagaon. The suspects then took them to a house in Kohora, the gateway to Kaziranga National Park. A transaction was in progress. A skin and 5 kg of tiger bone were at stake. Balbir Singh alias Bablu (27 years old), Dharansingh Bey (24 years old), Babu Teron alias Daysing Teron (22 years old), Barelong Teron (23 years old), Dilip Teron (30 years old), Jaysing Bey (27 years old) and Manjit Singh alias Biki were arrested. They admitted to killing the cat a few months earlier in the national park. Balbir Singh had already been arrested by the Special Task Force for similar acts.<sup>66</sup>

**December 30 and 31, 2018**

### **Umred Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Maharashtra, India**

100: such is the death toll of tigers poisoned or poached since the beginning of the year. The most heavily hit states are Madhya Pradesh (23 tigers) and Maharashtra (20 tigers). After the male T16, the body of the tigress T4 was discovered about 100–200 m from crops not far from the carcass of a boar partly devoured by predators and a dead civet. Farmers use the deadly insecticide Thimet that they mix with wheat dough to avoid boar intrusions. The boar died after eating the bait. The tigress died after eating part of the boar. Boar meat was found in her stomach.<sup>67</sup>



**December 31, 2018**

### **Chikhaldara, Amravati District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Seizure of a tiger skin. After receiving information from a confidential source, infiltrated forestry agents laid a trap for the traffickers by claiming to be interested. The nighttime rendezvous ended in the arrest of 2 traffickers and 2 accomplices who had escorted them. The 4 individuals are being held in custody for 7 days while the initial elements of the investigation are collected. The tiger was apparently poached in the Melghat Reserve. Other arrests are expected, in particular, that of the poacher himself.<sup>68</sup>

#### **Tigers dead in Maharashtra**

2018:	21
2017:	21
2016:	15
2015:	12
2014:	7
2013:	10

**December 31, 2018, January 5 and 8, 2019**

### **Kawal Tiger Reserve, Mancherial District, Telangana State, India**

Poaching of a Nilgai antelope. Discovery by the agent in charge of the Pembi forest of 10 kg of meat in the hands of Guglavath Prakash and accomplices. However, Mohd Hafezzuddin, instead of holding a formal examination, accepts 50,000 rupees (700 US\$) after a bargain and takes the meat. Five days later, on a Saturday evening, the same Prakash and his accomplices were arrested in Adilabad district. In their car they were carrying the skin of a tiger about 3.5 years old, a male according to the National Tiger Conservation Authority's photo library. Prakash and others, including a certain Munya, a farmer, claim that the tiger "accidentally" electrocuted himself. They then skinned him and the body was transported, burned and buried in the forest, far from Munya's field. Prakash, Munya and their 3 accomplices are specialists in electrocution. The antelope Nilgai had died in contact with a wild power line smuggled into an electrical transformer. Hafezzuddin and 2 of his deputies have been dismissed.<sup>69</sup>



**January 24, 2019**

### **Imlikheda, Chhindwara District, Madhya Pradesh State, India**

They were trying to sell a skin, teeth and tiger claws. Six arrests. The victim was reportedly poached 3-4 years ago in the Satpura reserve (see "On The Trail" n° 15 p. 61).<sup>70</sup>

## TIGERS - FOLLOWED

**January 27, 2019**

**Mancherial, Mancherial District, Telangana State, India**

The case begins with an electrocuted tiger. The tiger is then skinned and offered for sale for 35,000 US\$. Unfortunately for the poachers, the buyer is actually a member of the NGO The Tiger Hunting End Association and has notified the police. Four people were arrested and held in police custody for 14 days: Mekala Narsaiah, Bejpally Komoraiah, Dandaveni Sailu and Nasimboju Ravinder. Two other suspects, Thokala Mallaiah and Thokal Buchirajam, managed to escape.

Plot twist after the arrests: when interviewed, the poachers claim that the NGO's members are crooks who have allegedly promised them a multiplication of money through a religious rite. A priest came, wrapped the equivalent of 10,000 US\$ in banknotes given by the poachers in the tiger's skin and asked everyone to leave the room during the service. The members of the NGO and the so-called priest then ran off, leaving the skin behind but taking the 10,000 US\$ with them. When the police arrived, they only found the poachers and the tiger skin.

The police initially thought it was a smoke screen, but the fact is that the NGO members have since vanished into thin air and turned off their phones. Whether or not they were scammers, they allowed the skin to be seized and a series of arrests to be made. On February 20, almost a month after the case began, the last 16 people responsible for the tiger's death were arrested by police, who also seized a Jeep, 6,734 US\$ in cash and the equipment needed for electrocution.<sup>72</sup>



## INDONESIA

**October 19, 2018**

**Tapaktuan, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Sarkawi Bin Warigo (41 years old) and Sabaruddin Bin Alm. M Yusak (45 years old) were sentenced to 4 years in prison and fined 50 million rupees (3,300 US\$) for illegal possession of Sumatran tiger skins. If they do not pay the fine, they will be sentenced to an additional 4 months in prison.<sup>73</sup>



## NEPAL

**January 28, 2019**

**Chalnakhel, Kathmandu District, Province No. 3, Nepal**

Seizure of 56 tiger bones at Sabita Lama's home. Two arrests.<sup>74</sup>

## THAILAND

**October 11, 2018**

**Mueang Phitsanulok District, Phitsanulok Province, Thailand**

The 2 Vietnamese nationals thought they were going to reach their country by bus across Laos. But an informant prompted the police to interrupt their journey. They were carrying a large bag full of bones and smoked tiger meat that they had bought for 900 US\$ in Tak province, bordering Myanmar. Charged with the possession of a protected species, they were taken into police custody.<sup>75</sup>

## VIET NAM

**January 29, 2019**

**Lang Son, Lang Son Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 2 stuffed tigers. They had been exhibited since 2017 in the Quan Giam Sat temple to attract the offerings of the faithful.<sup>76</sup>



## SNOW LEOPARD

EUROPE

## UNITED KINGDOM

**October 23, 2018**

**Dudley, West Midlands County, England, United Kingdom**

An 8-year-old snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I) was killed after escaping from its enclosure at the zoo. The zoo management "had no other option to maintain public safety".<sup>32</sup>



## BENGAL LEOPARD CATS

ASIA

### THAILAND

**December 12, 2018**

#### **Koh Lanta Island, Krabi Province, Thailand**

Supakdee Sangkhao (33 years old) kept a male Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix I or II) in a cage for lucrative business: he crossed him with a Bengal cat and sold the kittens. They are trendy, tall with a speckled coat. Their price varies from 10,000 to 100,000 baht (300 to 3,000 US\$). There were 17 of them in the house when the police came to search it. Supakdee Sangkhao has been charged with possession of a protected species.<sup>51</sup>

**December 18, 2018**

#### **Moo 4, Na Mon District, Kalasin Province, Thailand**

facebook

Very proud of himself, Nopporn

Pakkeng (23 years old) had been unable to stop himself to trumpet on Facebook that he had killed a Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix I or II) on his rubber plantation and cooked it. Wildlife protectors relayed his message. He hastened to erase it. But it was too late. When the police arrived at his house, he said that it was his dog that killed the cat. Nopporn Pakkeng has been charged with possession of a protected species.<sup>52</sup>

### VIET NAM

**December 27, 2018**

#### **Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam**

A so-called "ecological shelter" held a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix I or II) prisoner in a cage, planning to kill it to make a trophy. It was again ENV that received the alert and forwarded it to the authorities. The little feline was transferred to a safe place while waiting to be released.<sup>53</sup>

## JAGUARS

**Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.**

AMERICA

### BOLIVIA

**November 9, 2018**

#### **Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Department of Santa Cruz, Bolivia**

Li Ming and Yin Lan sentenced to 4 and 3 years in prison. They had hung a sign in their restaurant essentially saying "jaguar teeth for sale here". After the restaurant was raided, 185 jaguar teeth from at least 46 individuals, as well as skins and parts of other wild animals were discovered on the premises.<sup>80</sup>



## BRAZIL

**January 13, 2019**

#### **Between Manaus, State of Amazonas and Boa Vista, State of Roraima, Brazil**

Discovery of a crushed jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I) on the side of the BR 174, which connects Manaus to Boa Vista. The animal's head and paws have been cut off.<sup>81</sup>

## MEXICO

**December 15, 2018**

#### **Chihuahua, Chihuahua State, Mexico**

Having been reported on a public road trip, a jaguar escaped from a private home was transferred to Chihuahua Zoo. The owner had certificates of origin but the accommodation conditions were not satisfactory with regard to public safety and animal welfare. So, subject to certain formalities, anyone can have a jaguar at home.<sup>82</sup>

## PERU

**January 15, 2019**

#### **Yurimaguas, Alto Amazonas Province, Loreto region, Peru**

Killing of a jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I) accused of attacking chickens and other domestic animals. The images have been posted on social networks.<sup>83</sup>

## JAGUARUNDIS

AMERICA

## PERU

**November 17, 2018**

#### **La Merced, Chanchamayo Province, Junin Department, Peru**

Confiscation of a jaguarundi (*Puma yagouaroundi*, Appendix II) found behind the counter of a Chinese restaurant.<sup>79</sup>



## ONCILLAS

AMERICA

### ECUADOR

November 12, 2018

**Dayuma Parish, Orellana Province, Ecuador**

Rescue of an abandoned oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), aged 3 to 4 months. He was urgently handed over to the good care of the Sucumbíos shelter. Heavy concerns for the mother.<sup>77</sup>



### PARAGUAY

October 25, 2018

**San Bernardino, Cordillera Department, Paraguay**

Rescue of an oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I) that was kept as a pet. Informed by a family, the city authorities handed the oncilla over to a shelter, which plans to release it in the long term.<sup>78</sup>



## PUMAS

EUROPE

### GERMANY

Early October 2018

**Munich, Free State of Bavaria, Germany**

Seizure of a puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II) skin with the head, intended for decoration, in a package from the United States.<sup>84</sup>



## LYNX

EUROPE

### GERMANY

October 29, 2018

**Frankfurt am Main, State of Hesse, Germany**

Seizure of a Eurasian lynx skin (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix I) with the head in the luggage of a traveller from Russia.<sup>85</sup>

### SPAIN

December 28, 2018

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

2018: 27 Iberian lynxes (*Lynx pardinus*, Appendix I) poached or killed by collision with road vehicles. The last victim identified was hit by 300 lead shot.<sup>86</sup>



Geolocation necklace burden

## VARIOUS SPECIES FELINES

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

##### FAMILY AFFAIRS

November 25, 2018

Hartbeesfontein, North West Province, South Africa



Arrest of 6 Vietnamese and 3 South Africans, between 22 and 60 years old, near Klerksdorp. Police found lion bones and meat, tiger skin and all the butchering equipment on an abandoned farm. In December 2018, the 3 South Africans, Michael Frederich Fouche, Johagem Louis Fouche and Lourens Pretorius, were released on a bail of 10,000 rand (700 US\$) each and will have to report to the police station every Monday, Wednesday and Friday pending trial.<sup>87</sup>



#### BURKINA FASO

December 17, 2018

Ouagadougou, Kadiogo Province, Central Region, Burkina Faso

Interpellation of 2 nationals in Ouagadougou by water and forest officials for attempting to sell 3 leopard and 2 lion skins. The skins came from the W-Arly-Pendjari Park (WAP), which extends over Burkina, Niger and Benin. As the procedure is ongoing, the identity of the 2 men cannot be revealed. For Sibibou Sina, Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment, this arrest is an opportunity to invite the population to participate in the protection of national resources.<sup>88</sup>

## SENEGAL

Early December 2018

Pikine and Dakar, Dakar Region, Senegal

Arrest of 3 traffickers. Seizure of fragments and bands of lion and leopard skins, about twenty lion parts (paws, back and sides), bodies of at least 6 servals and ammunition. The total seizure represents more than 2,000,000,000 CFA francs (3,040 €), 4 times more if it were exported. The communiqué from the Directorate of Water and Forests, Hunting and Soil Conservation emphasizes that "the cutting of whole lion and leopard skins has become the new method of operation for wildlife traffickers to cross borders and avoid the vigilance of increasingly effective wildlife traffic controls". The lion is the emblem of Senegal.<sup>89</sup>

### AMERICA

#### MEXIQUE

October 9, 2018

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua State, Mexico

Seizure of 2 African lionesses (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) and one tigress (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) who lived in a building without special protection measures, in the same room as the owners.<sup>90</sup>



Mid-October 2018

Mexico State, Mexico

Seizure of skins and stuffed heads of jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I) and toucan (Ramphastidae family) during a random check of parcel delivery companies. The packages were destined for Tijuana.<sup>91</sup>



ASIA

INDIA

GANG

December 8, 2018  
Melghat Tiger Reserve,  
Maharashtra State, India

15 arrests.

A gang harvesting an alleged aphrodisiac plant (*Chlorophytum Borivilianum*) in the Girguti forest was "disturbed" by a patrol that was initially greeted by stone throwing. The tribals then admitted to participating in tiger and leopard poisonings by throwing pesticides into water points and setting traps. The figure of 5 tigers and 5 leopards is given. It is widely overestimated according to the vice-conservator of the Melghat forests. Other sources are more categorical. "There are reports that these accused destroyed carcasses by burning and sold skins and tiger nails to people involved in black magic and treasure hunt."<sup>92</sup>



Felines and Elephants



AFRICA

GABON

December 13, 2018  
Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Arrest of Christophe Meyi-Meyi, a 24-year-old Gabonese national, and Dramane Sawadogou and Idrissa Bansé from Burkina Faso, aged 32 and 37, for trafficking ivory and leopard skins. A .12 caliber weapon was also found in Meyi-Meyi's home. The sale of the trophies would have brought the 3 men a little over 500 US\$.<sup>1</sup>



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UGANDA

October 2, 2018  
Kampala, Central Region,  
Uganda

Penal toll of the operation carried out from 27 September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October in Kenya and Uganda by Interpol, in cooperation with Eastern African Police Chiefs Organization (EAPCCO) and the Southern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO): 16 convictions to 2 years prison for trafficking in banned plant species, 5 for trafficking in leopard skins, bush meat and ivory.<sup>2</sup>



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

October 2, 2018  
Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo

Arrest of 2 men in possession of many worked ivories, including 75 bracelets, 260 Chinese chop sticks and some statuettes. They also had 3 leopard skins.<sup>3</sup>



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ZAMBIA

End of December 2018  
Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia

Oscar Nyirongo and Gabriel Nkhoma were sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment with hard labour for the illegal possession of 8 kg of ivory and a leopard skin. Morgan Ngulube was sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment with hard labour for the illegal detention of 2 kg of ivory.<sup>4</sup>



ASIA

INDIA

November 22, 2018  
Pannimadai, Coimbatore  
District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks, 2 leopard teeth and 2 cars. The value of the 2 tusks reached 10 lakhs RS: 13,580 US\$ and 2,715 US\$/kg. The 2 men, Murugesh, 27 years old and Prakash, 32 years old, came from Kerala. They were picked up in a car park by a team from the WCCB, of police and of the organization Traffic who presented themselves as "interested" in the goods.<sup>5</sup>

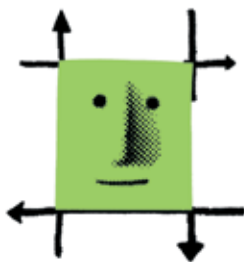


# ON<sub>the</sub> TRAIL

Previous issues on  
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FONDATION  
**FRANZ  
WEBER**



ROBIN DES BOIS

## Wolves

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

### AMERICA

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

November 15, 2018

#### State of Arizona, United States of America

Jason William Kunkel pleads guilty to having shot to death, inside the National Apache-Sitgreaves, a female Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*), "one of the most endangered mammals in North America," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agent in charge of the case. Kunkel was sentenced to a 5-year probation including a strict ban on hunting, entering Arizona national forests except when driving across them. Also, he must pay 7500 US\$ in compensation to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and permanently hand over his Remington Model 770 with telescopic sight to the State.<sup>1</sup>



WOLVES - FOLLOWED =>

**January 14, 2019**

**Galveston Island, State of Texas, United States of America**

Discovery in the genome of a pack of wild canids on Galveston Island of red wolf genes (*Canis lupus rufus*) considered extinct in the wild since 1980. Analysis by Princeton University biologists shows that Galveston canids are hybrids of red wolves and coyotes. Kim Wheeler, director of the North Carolina based Red Wolf Coalition, keeps a cool head. "We can get excited, but in my mind, we really need to let science do its due diligence to determine what this animal is." She does not want breeders and other sections of the population to attack these wild canids on Galveston Island in a defensive reflex by giving them the bad reputation that has brought bad luck to red wolves.

The protection of the red wolf is ambiguous. The US Endangered Species Act of 1973 does not take hybrid species into account. However, the red wolf is the result of an interbreeding between the grey wolf and the coyote. The red wolf does not yet exist in the eyes of CITES. However, IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) has listed it as an endangered species since 1996.

By 1950, the species was being decimated due to a predator control program. At the end of the 1960s and 1970s, a few packs survived on the borders of Texas and Louisiana on the Gulf of Mexico. 14 specimens were then caught for breeding in semi-captivity. 63 red wolves were released between 1887 and 1994 in the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina and the Great Smoky Mountains. The population reached 100 to 120 specimens in 2012. It is now facing a severe decline (40 in 2018).

The federal justice has just granted the requests of local NGOs that the authorization granted to breeders and landowners to kill red wolves, without them threatening domestic livestock, pets or humans, be considered illegal.<sup>2</sup>



**ASIA**

**CHINA**

**January 3, 2019**

**Hohhot, Inner Mongolia Province, China**

Seizure at the border post with Mongolia of 6 dead wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) in trucks loaded with coal. One arrest. Investigation in progress.<sup>3</sup>



**EUROPE**

**SPAIN**

**OPERATION CHOQUER**

**November 22-23, 2018**

**Valladolid, Province of Valladolid, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain**

At the home of a certain J.A.B.T., seizure of the heads of 3 Iberian wolves (*Canis lupus signatus*, Appendix II) and 3 skulls; 34,000 cartridges of different calibers, including over one thousand used by NATO; 40 detonators; an artillery projectile; 3 rifles, one of which had the number erased; 8 hunting rifles and 2 handguns, including one double barrel. The investigation started 2 years ago, after SEPRONA discovered that J.A.B.T. had committed 6 hunting violations in the provinces of Valladolid, Soria, Palencia and León.<sup>4</sup>

**FRANCE**

**October 16 and November 28, 2018**

**France**

October 16: permission to shot down 8 more wolves by defense shot until the end of 2018. The maximum quota of 43 had already been met mid-October. According to public authorities, "2723 attacks and 9195 victims [within domestic herds] have been recorded for which the wolf's responsibility has not been discarded." Nor has it been confirmed.<sup>5</sup>



# Bears

## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 22, 2018

#### Prince William's Bay, State of Alaska, United States of America

Andrew Renner was sentenced to 5 months in prison, 2 of which were suspended, a fine of 20,000 US\$, of which 11,000 US\$ was suspended, and his son Owen was sentenced to community service, a suspended prison sentence and a training course in hunting. In April 2018, they had killed a black American bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) and her 2 cubs at close range in their den, skinned the bear on site, filled bags of meat and left the area on skis before returning 2 days later to collect all the casings, remove all anatomical waste from the bears and other evidence of the carnage (see "On the Trail" n°22 page 72). Their actions and words were recorded by witness cameras used to better understand bear behavior and to try to explain their decline in the Prince William Sound Archipelago. The boat, trailer, pickup truck, 4 firearms, 2 iPhones and 2 pairs of skis that were used for the carnage and concealment were permanently seized.<sup>1</sup>



### PERU

December 13, 2018

#### Sicaya, Province of Huancayo, Department of Junín, Peru

Weakened, dehydrated, with cuts to the paws and tied to a tree, the spectacled bear cub (*Tremarctos ornatus*, Appendix I) of about 8 months old was rescued by the SERFOR (Servicio Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre) and transferred for examination to the Surco zoo, the only one in the country to have successfully managed reproduction of the species.<sup>2</sup>



## ASIA

### ARMENIA

November 23, 2018

#### Yerevan Region, Armenia

Under the surveillance of an Iranian vet, a female Syrian brown bear (*Ursus arctos syriacus*, Appendix I) was anaesthetized and transferred from her feces-soiled cage in which she had been confined to a crate covered with straw in the back of a tarp-covered truck. Her fellow-sufferer, the Siberian brown bear (*Ursus arctos collaris*, Appendix I) had the same happy fate but the process was a bit more acrobatic. He weighs 500 kg and after the anesthesia, the bars of the cage had to be unsoldered and no less than 10 people were needed to transport him to the back of a cattle truck under the observation of 3 Armenian and English vets.

The 2-vehicle convoy drove for 45 minutes, blue lights flashing, before reaching the FPWC shelter (Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets). The 2 miracle survivors have been put in reinforced quarantine. See "On the Trail" n°19 p.80, n°20 p.76, n°21 p.71.<sup>3</sup>



### CAMBODIA

January 21, 2019

#### Pursat Province, Cambodia

Voluntary surrender of an Asian black bear cub (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I). Her owner had bought her to "save" her and kept her for 2 years. She was transported to the rehabilitation center in Phnom Tamao under the responsibility of the NGO, Free the Bears.<sup>4</sup>



## INDIA

**January 12, 2019**

**Katteri, Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Another boar trap that captures an endangered animal, in this case a sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I). His mother was next to the trap. The machine had been placed in a tea plantation by 2 car mechanics. R. Vikram residing in Coonoor and D. William in Glendale Estate. They are held in police custody for 14 days. Sumesh Soman, the district forestry manager, says his teams were alerted at night by the growls of suffering animals and arrived at the scene at dawn with cages to transport injured animals if necessary. He hopes that dissuasive penalties will be applied against the 2 poachers.<sup>5</sup>



**22 and 23 January 2019**

**Valmiki National Park, East Champaran District, Bihar State, India**

- A dead bear. Five poachers arrested
- A bear extracted from a trap in a sugar cane field inside the park.<sup>6</sup>



## IRAK

**Early November 2018**

**Iraq, Border with Syria**

He thought he had found a peaceful shelter to hibernate at the border between these 2 war-torn countries. He was forced out by an Iraqi border guard patrol. They killed him in cold blood, with a smile on their faces.

The Syrian brown bear (*Ursus arctos syriacus*, Appendix I) is the smallest among bears and the most discrete. So shy and endangered that he was last spotted in Syria in 2004. The species has entirely disappeared from Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. A few individuals survive in Turkey, Iraq and Iran.<sup>7</sup>



## RUSSIA

**January 15, 2019**

**Poltavka checkpoint, Krai of the Primory, Russia. Border with China.**

Seizure of 6 bear claws (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) hidden in a cigarette pack following their discovery by Laura, a Russian customs dog. Prosecution of the Chinese national. He acknowledges that the detention of claws is illegal.<sup>9</sup>



## THAILAND

**January 19, 2019**

**Wang Noi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand**

Coaches are the daily vectors of trafficking. This one serves the regular line between Bangkok, Thailand and Pakse, Laos. Tipped off, police stopped and searched it and found 1,666 bear claws from at least 83 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) and 4 tiger bones.



The value of the seizure is equal to 255,000 US\$, according to the official services. The Laotian bus driver was responsible for the delivery. He knew the shippers in Thailand and the consignee in Laos. The 3 accomplices have already carried out 10 similar smuggling operations by the same means. The bear claw is sold at around 22 US\$ to jewelers. Mounted as a pendant, it sells for 255 to 320 US\$. It is said to protect against disease and poverty. At the homes of the 2 Vietnamese traffickers who were reportedly at the root of the trafficking, police laid hands on a shell of a hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) and another of a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I). The main suspects are Mr. Katay Sisouvanh, Mr. Warapong Panjaem and Mr. Van Hop.<sup>10</sup>

## VIET NAM

January 9, 2019

**Ninh Binh Bear Sanctuary, Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 2 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) aged 3 weeks. They will be collected by the Ninh Binh Bear Sanctuary.<sup>11</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

January 31, 2019

**Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam**

Questioning of a teacher selling wildlife items on Facebook with the complicity of his mother. In this case, 2 bear paws.<sup>12</sup>

facebook



## EUROPE

### GERMANY

December 11, 2018

**Aschersleben, State of Saxony-Anhalt, Germany**

Seizure of a bear skin with his head (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) in a package from Russia. No CITES permit.<sup>13</sup>



## FRANCE

October 4, 5 and 31, 2018

**Ossau and Aspe Valleys, Pyrénées-Atlantiques Department, France.**

Release of 2 female bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) originating from Slovenia in the west of the Pyrenees chain. For the last part of the journey, they were dropped off in the forest by helicopter to avoid demonstrations of opponents. They are about 7 and 8 years old and weigh 140 and 150 kg. They travelled 100 and 150 km 3 weeks after their release, moving by night and feeding off of beechnuts, acorns and blueberries. They seek a hole or sheltered ditch that would allow them to hibernate until March 2019.<sup>14</sup>

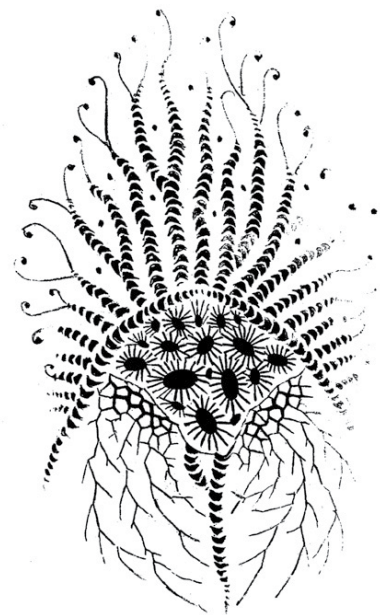


## GREECE

December 24, 2018

**Pylorio, West Macedonia Region, Greece**

A brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was found, pregnant, decapitated and with her paws cut off.<sup>15</sup>



# Giraffes

Table with giraffe's legs of unknown origin for sale from Germany 1900 € on Amazon.



**AFRICA**

**KENYA**

**Mid-December 2018  
Kenya**

Rescue of a reticulated giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*) caught in a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.<sup>1</sup>



**January 21, 2019  
Galana Wildlife Conservancy, Kilifi County, Kenya**

Rescue of a male giraffe, neck caught in a trap. Favorable prognosis.<sup>2</sup>



**MOZAMBIQUE**

**End of December 2018  
Maputo Special Reserve, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Rescue of 2 giraffes (genus *Giraffa*) wounded by throwing weapons. Difficult operation. Captured after 2 days, anesthetized. Difficult to control the fall to avoid neck fracture. Wound disinfection. Administration of anti-inflammatory drugs. One of the giraffes was pregnant and accompanied by a one-and-a-half-year-old offspring.<sup>3</sup>

# Rhinoceroses

The white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* ranging in Africa are listed in Appendix I, except for the white rhinoceros populations of Eswatini and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies. The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: *Rhinoceros unicornis*, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

**"On the Trail" n°23  
The value of horn on the black market, according to media or official sources**

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref.
Africa	Zimbabwe	44,750	11
	South Africa	13,800	42
Asia	China	25,930	50
	Thailand	28,570	67
	Turkey	64,705	68

**EASTERN AFRICA**

**KENYA**

**December 2018  
Amboseli Ecosystem, Kenya**

Emergency care for a rhino whose left front leg was seriously injured by a metal trap. Joint operation of the KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) and DSWT (David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust). Optimistic prognosis.<sup>1</sup>



**January 8, 2019  
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Meru County, Kenya**  
Emergency care for a female rhino victim of several leg injuries of unknown origin. Prognosis guarded.<sup>2</sup>

## MALAWI

**October 19, 2018**

**Liwonde, Southern Region, Malawi**

Sentencing of the poacher of a female black rhino to 18 years in prison and of his 2 accomplices to 8 and 10 years in prison with hard labour and without the possibility of avoiding imprisonment by an alternative fine. In the grounds to the judgment, the senior judge Mr. Masoamphambe described the poachers as “enemies of the Nation”. The Director of National Parks, Mr. Kumchedwa, welcomed the increased sanctions. 97% of poaching and trafficking trials now result in prison sentences, while in previous years, 60% of cases resulted in an average fine of 40 US\$.<sup>3</sup>



## MOZAMBIQUE

**October 7, 2018**

**Maputo International Airport, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of 9 horns wrapped in aluminum foil amid food products in the luggage of a Chinese national on his way to Viet Nam. This is the fifth seizure of this category at the airport since the beginning of the year. The suspects have always been of Asian origin and the main destination is Viet Nam.<sup>4</sup>



**October 17, 2018**

**Beira Airport, Sofala Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of horn fragments in the suitcase of a passenger flying to China via South Africa.<sup>5</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Maputo International Airport, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of 9 kg rhinoceros horns in the belongings of F. Zheg, 49 years old, Chinese passport. He was getting ready to board a Qatar Airways flight.<sup>6</sup>

**December 4, 2018**

**Mozambique**

Poaching of a female black rhino. There are less than 2,500 in southern Africa, their only wild habitat, and a few in zoos in Europe, Japan and the United States.<sup>7</sup>

## ZAMBIA

**October 4 - November 26, 2018**

**Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia**

- Arrest of 2 magistrates of the local court and 3 other persons presented as businessmen and real estate agents in possession of 2 horns with a total weight of 7.125 kg. Bail release of 100,000 kwachas (8,430 US\$) each.

- Sentencing of the 2 magistrates, Active Tambo and Elvis Siakachoma, and their accomplices to 7 years in prison.<sup>8</sup>

## ZIMBABWE

**October 18, 2018**

**Bubye Valley Conservancy, Southern Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**

Discovery of a freshly killed and dehorned black male rhino. Alive, he is said having an economic value of 120,000 US\$. This is the fourth time since the beginning of the year that poachers have fired on the rhinos in the area.<sup>9</sup>

**Mid-December 2018**

**Beitbridge, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe**

Celestino Shate and Faso Moyo were sentenced to 10 years in prison for poaching. Their footprints were identified by rangers who tracked them for 3 hours. After the patrol fired 3 warning shots, they fled instead of surrendering. Makechemu, their accomplice, involved in a previous case of poaching, was acquitted due to a lack of sufficient proof.<sup>10</sup>



**December 23, 2018**

**Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 20.98 kg of horns valued at 938,700 US\$ (44,750 US\$ /kg) from 7 Chinese nationals aged 25 to 35 years. Police raided their homes under a warrant from the prosecutor after receiving from their cleaning lady detailed information about suspicious plastic bags. All 7 men were arrested. Their lawyer says they are ready to appear and prove their innocence.<sup>11</sup>

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Early October 2018  
Skukuza Section, Kruger National Park,  
Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Complaint of SANParks to the Order of Magistrates against Simon Fankomo, a judge of the Skukuza court specializing in poaching offences. SANParks accuses Fankomo, who was appointed to the Skukuza court 3 months ago, of consistently showing poachers an indulgence that is not in accordance with the criminal code. For example, a man who entered Kruger Park with an unregistered high-caliber weapon was fined 3000 rand (205 US\$) when he was facing 5 to 15 years in prison. Repeat poaching offenders are granted bail and Fankomo is also accused of transferring poaching files to the Bushbuckridge court without any legal reason. The Skukuza court, which began operating at the beginning of 2017, is renowned for the quality of its investigation files.<sup>12</sup>

**October 2018  
KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Eric Nzimande, President of the regional court, has been relieved of his duties until further notice. He is suspected of having asked for and received money in exchange for the appointment of lawyers to the rank of acting magistrate. One of the beneficiaries would be a regular defender of rhino poachers. These arrangements would have resulted in light sentences or too many releases on bail for poachers.<sup>13</sup>

**October 2, 2018  
Great Fish River Nature Reserve, South Africa**

Arrest of 3 alleged poachers a few hours after the discovery of 2 black rhinos shot to death in the reserve.<sup>14</sup>

**Early October 2018  
South Africa**

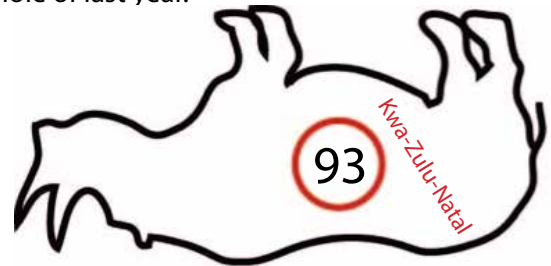
Attempt to rescue a young male whose nasal horn was cut at the bottom by poachers. The bandage is made of fiberglass.<sup>15</sup>



© Saving The Survivors

**Early October 2018  
Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.  
Border with Eswatini.**

Arrest of 6 alleged poachers in a guest house. Seizure of 2 knives, 7 ammunition from a CZ550 magnum with an erased number. Vincent Mathothe, Hloniphani Khumalo, Mhlekiwa Dlamini, Florence Lubisis, Mogala Ragolane and Frans Tshabangu, aged 34 to 48, are in pre-trial detention and are seeking bail. Less poaching in KwaZulu-Natal in 2018 than in 2017 according to the KwaZulu-Natal police spokesman. To date, 93 against 192 for the whole of last year.



Mr. Engelbrecht, manager of the Vryheid Game Reserve, is in favour of the free sale (under conditions) of rhino horns.

“When I started up, every farm had up to 8 rhinos on the property. Now, there are only 3 farms in the area that still have rhinos.” “A living rhino is no longer worth much”. He advances the price of 180,000 rand (12,760 US\$) for a 10-year-old adult female - because of the risks of poaching, security costs and permanent anxiety. The arguments of supporters of the free sale of horns are based on the following figures. A kilo of horn sells for 350,000 rand (25,000 US\$) in the Far East. Poachers receive 100,000 rand (7,090 US\$) per kilo. A rhino would produce 1 kg of horn per year, the annual income for a single specimen then would be around 200,000 rand (14,180 US\$) per year and a rhino living 40 years then would be worth several million rand.<sup>16</sup>



**October 10, 2018  
KwaMsane, KwaZulu-Natal Province,  
South Africa**

Three arrests aged 20 to 28.<sup>17</sup>



© KwaMsane SAPS

**October 11, 2018**

**Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

New involvement of a SAPS (South African Police Service) agent in horn trafficking. Sizwe Buthelezi was caught in the act of transporting 2 freshly cut horns from the reserve, Makhamisa section, and carrying a .458 caliber rifle which number was erased and which came from a vault where weapons seized on poachers are stored as evidence pending trial. Buthelezi tried to escape but his car crashed into a wall. An accomplice managed to escape. It was only on Sunday, October 21, that the case was made public thanks to an investigation by the media News24, which had received confidential information. The next day, Monday, October 22, Buthelezi's application for interim release was heard by the Ngwelezane court. It was granted to him under a bail of 2000 rand (130 US\$).<sup>18</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

**Kruger Park, Limpopo or Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Arrest of 8 suspected poachers in 3 different sections of the park thanks to the joint efforts of the rangers and the canine brigade, with the help of helicopters. Seizure of large calibers, ammunition and the usual poaching kits for rhinos (or elephants).<sup>19</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Near Kampersrus, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Three presumed poachers were arrested in possession of unregistered fire arms, munitions, a knife and an axe. Two of them, Maseko and Themba were released on bail for 500 rand (35 US\$) each until the trial. The third was acquitted.<sup>20</sup>



**October 26, 2018**

**Near Lephalale, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Interception around 9:45 p.m. of a vehicle reported on Route 33. Seizure of a firearm, large calibers, 6 ammunitions, an axe, and 3 knives. Three arrests. Suspicion of imminent poaching.<sup>21</sup>



**October 27, 2018**

**Near Kuruman, Northern Cape Province, South Africa**



Violent arrest of 5 alleged poachers and seizure of an assault rifle. They are suspected of having poached several rhinos in the area in August 2018.<sup>22</sup>



**October 27, 2018**

**KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

A guard who was inspecting the fence in a hunting reserve was hit by several shots of unknown origin. He's in the hospital in a state of absolute emergency.<sup>23</sup>

**October 28, 2018**

**Near Komatipoort, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Border with Mozambique.**

Seizure of 5 horns in a stolen vehicle. Three suspects were arrested immediately, and an accomplice who managed to flee was arrested subsequently. He was in possession of 2 rifles. The 4 men asked to be released on bail.<sup>24</sup>



**October 2018**

**Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

They were getting stronger in a guest house before poaching. Seizure of one rifle, ammunition, knives, and an axe. Interview of Mathothe, Khumalo, Dlamini, Lubisi, Ragolane, and Tshabangu, alleged poachers. aged 34 to 53 years.<sup>25</sup>

**November 2, 2018**

**White River, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

After their spectacular arrest (see "On the Trail" n°22 p. 81), their release on bail is a joy for fans and newspaper headlines : Petros Sidney Mabuza aka Mister Big released on a bail of 6,200 US\$ (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 79), Claude Lubisi 690 US\$, Clyde Mnisi 3,400 US\$, Joseph Nyalunga alias Big Joe (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 69) 8,200 US\$, Aretha Mhlanga 690 US\$ and Rachel Qwebana 690 US\$. None of the band members have the right to enter and leave Kruger Park without informing the police. Their accomplice Phineas Lubisi, a senior SAPS officer stationed in Skukuza at the time of his arrest, had been released on bail of 690 US\$ a month earlier. The police officers in charge of the investigation received physical threats. They fear for their safety and that of their families. The prosecutor's cars and a Hawks vehicle were vandalized during the hearing.<sup>26</sup>

**November 9, 2018**

**Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

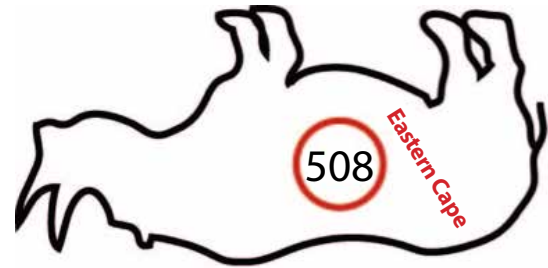
Patrick Nkuna was sentenced to 40 years in prison with a minimum mandatory term of 33 years and 3 months. In November 2015, Nkuna and 2 accomplices were caught in the act of poaching within Kruger Park, in the Pretoriuskop sector. Pursued by a low-flying SanParks helicopter, Nkuna finally shot at the helicopter. The pilot, who had 18 years of experience, managed to dodge the shot. Nkuna ran into the bushes, throwing his weapon aside so he could run faster. The pilot caught up with him a few hundred meters away and, on the open savanna, managed to trip him with one of the helicopter skids. A ranger jumped out of the helicopter as it landed and, after a brief struggle, immobilized Nkuna. The helicopter was on a special mission. It was transporting General Johan Jooste for a general inspection of the southern part of the park. Since that epic incident, the SanParks helicopters and fixed-wing planes have been the targets of poachers' bullets 4 times. Up until now, none of them have crashed, contrary to the case of the tragic death of Roger Gower in Tanzania. (See "On the Trail" n°12 p. 80).<sup>27</sup>



**November 10-11, 2018**

**Lombardini Game Farm, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Fatal poaching of a female about to give birth. A watchman heard 4 shots in the night. He immediately called the police and the reserve personnel. All the reinforcements scared off the poachers. The victim died around 11 a.m., several kilometers from the site of the ambush. "Usually, poaching occurs during the full moon. This time, it was dark, visibility was bad," commented the reserve director. The poachers may have had night vision equipment. This was the sixth case of poaching in the reserve. According to Stop Rhino Poaching, the poaching toll for 2018 was 508, as of September 21. The Lombardini Game Farm covers 1200 ha.<sup>28</sup>



**November 13, 2018**

**Mokopane (Potgietersrus), Limpopo Province, South Africa**

It was the last of the rhino syndicate led by Dawie Groenenwald, who stays in prison while waiting for the endlessly reported trial. Nardus Rossouw was just released on a bail of 30,000 rand, which is 2,100 US\$. He is assigned to his sister's residence and should not leave Gauteng province without authorization. Rossouw, during his first release on bail, had already mixed with a dark traffic. He had been arrested for the possession of 11 horns belonging to an elderly, financially needy breeder to whom "he would have wanted to help out." His compassion costed him a 100,000 rand fine (6,800 US\$) and the revocation of his first release on bail.<sup>28 bis</sup>

**November 15, 2018**

**Balule Nature Reserve (Kruger National Park), Limpopo Province, South Africa**

After a 42-km pursuit, 3 poachers were arrested thanks to the coordinated work of the canine brigade, led by Annie, a 4-year-old Belgian sheepdog, and the Wildlife College's Flying for Rhinos team. The suspects were charged with illegal entrance and illegal possession of weapons and munitions.<sup>29</sup>

**November 15, 2018**

**South Africa**

Discovered by a team of Rhino 911, 3 dead poached females and an orphan, shot but not killed. Emergency care was provided on-site. Small enough to be taken onboard in the back of the off-road vehicle, he was then taken to the orphanage.<sup>30</sup>



## REPEATED OFFENSE

November 28, 2018

Zeerust, North West Province, South Africa

- Sentencing of Malema alias Jet to 10 years in prison, including 4 years suspended for poaching endangered species, 4 years in prison for possession of prohibited weapons, and 2 years in prison for carrying prohibited ammunition. The sentences are concurrent. It's a repeated offense.

- Sentencing of Thutlwa and Tsiepe, respectively tracker in a lodge and village chief, to 4 years' jail and a fine of 200,000 rand or 14,400 US\$ suspended, provided they do not commit similar offences within 5 years. They had, in an organized gang, participated in a poaching attempt. They are also sentenced to a fixed fine of 5000 rand, or 360 US\$, which they have undertaken to pay in 10 monthly installments from December 2018.

- Sentencing of Balate for poaching endangered species to 8 years in prison, 6 of which were suspended. A Mozambican national, he was also sentenced to 18 months in prison for illegal immigration. The sentences are concurrent.<sup>31</sup>

See "On the Trail" n°17 p. 80.



## End of November 2018

South Africa

Poaching of a male. Found alive by a patrol. An on-site x-ray diagnoses a fracture at the level of the elbow joint. Shortly after the treatment and after much effort to stand up, he died of exhaustion.<sup>32</sup>

## End of November 2018

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



Little orphaned rhino after her mother's deadly poaching. Found wandering in the bush. Taken care of by the vets. Transferred to the Care for Wild shelter.<sup>33</sup>

## November 2018

Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Permanent seizure of a Toyota Hilux double cab, 2 Ford Rangers 4WD, a BMW 3 Series, a Mercedes Benz CDI, night vision glasses, 68,400 rand (4,700 US\$) in cash belonging to Mr. Bhamani, Mr. Nyathi, Mr. Dube, nationals of Zimbabwe and Mr. Maqanda, South African citizen. Bhamani and Dube had purchased their luxury vehicles 2 days after the poaching of 2 rhinos in Sterkstroom, Eastern Cape Province, in September 2017. "Although the suspects reported themselves as self-employed, I have established they are in truth unemployed and rely on proceeds of rhino poaching for livelihood and acquisition of assets," testified the investigator before the Grahamstown Supreme Court.<sup>34</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

December 7, 2018

Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Another deferment of the trial of Hugo Ras (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 67, n°7 p. 71, n°10 p. 47, n°13 p. 77, n°14 p. 64, n°15 p. 82, n°20 p. 81), his wife, his brother-in-law Arno Smith, the former Hawks agent Willie Oosthuizen, a former lawyer listed with the Pretoria bar, a helicopter pilot and other accomplices. The bail release conditions for 4 of the accused were lightened. The trial is now scheduled for November 2019. The investigation was opened in 2014.<sup>35</sup>

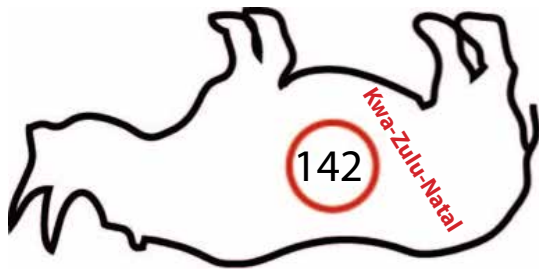
December 9, 2018

Lombardini Game Farm, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

A female white rhinoceros was poached. Two horns were amputated. This was the fourth case of poaching in less than a month in the Lombardini Game Farm.<sup>36</sup>

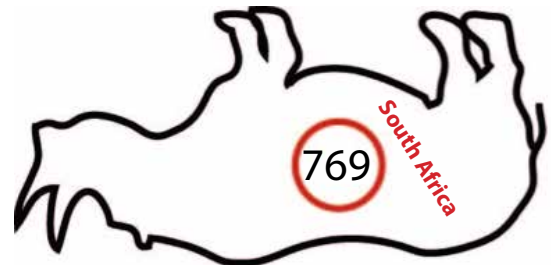
**Mid-December 2019  
Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Poaching of a female and amputation of the horn while she was still alive. Vain attempt by the veterinarians to save her. She had to be finished off. To date, since the beginning of the year, 142 rhino have been poached in KwaZulu-Natal.<sup>37</sup>



**January 1, 2019  
South Africa**

For the past 3 years, rhino poaching has been declining in South Africa, according to official statistics. In 2018, 769 rhinos were poached, 259 fewer than in 2017. Of these 769, 421 were killed in Kruger Park. This is the first time in 5 years that the death toll from poaching has fallen below 1000. Fewer rhinos, fewer targets for poachers.<sup>41</sup>



**December 19, 2018  
KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

A new arrival at the orphanage: a baby male rhino, approximately 4 months old, whose mother was poached. He was following another female, but was in mortal danger because his adoptive mother was not in lactation.<sup>38</sup>



**January 10, 2019  
Johannesburg OR Tambo International Airport, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Seizure of 116 kg of horns worth 23.2 million rand (about 13,800 US\$/kg) thanks to the flair of the canine brigade on patrol in the airport's freight zone warehouses. The 30 horns were hidden in a container full of mats and plywood plates on their way to Dubai.<sup>42</sup>



**January 15, 2019  
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Mr. Lucky Mkansi and Nzima Joe Sihlangu, Kruger Park rangers suspected of being involved in rhino poaching, were arrested and released on a 10,000 rand (720 US\$) bail. Bail is subject to strict conditions: no travel without prior authorization, no direct or electronic contact with other rangers. A third ranger will be summoned at a later date. He is in pre-trial detention.<sup>43</sup>

**December 30, 2018  
Ventersburg, Free State Province, South Africa**

A 23-year-old male black rhinoceros was poached in the Great Fish River Nature Reserve. The 2 horns that were taken are estimated to be worth 1.5 million rand (110,000 US\$). A medicine man and an ambulance driver, along with 4 accomplices apparently from Mozambique, were arrested the next day at a road block. In their 2 cars, the 2 horns and a .375 caliber were seized.<sup>39</sup>

**December 31, 2018  
South Africa**

Surprise arrival in the orphanage of a three-month-old female child. Poached mother. Not at all convenient, she let herself be tamed by milk bottles, showing on this occasion her intact nasal horn.<sup>40</sup>



**January 23, 2019  
Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province, South Africa**

Loss of a male rhino in the middle of the night. The park management is appalled. In addition to rumors about the so-called virtues of horns, they blame the "Ferrari factor". Owning a horn would show that you are very high up in the society.<sup>44</sup>



**January 28, 2019**

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

Seizure of 10 horns or horn sections. Arrest of the 2 traffickers about to fly to Viet Nam. Wildlife Alert: 08.60.01.01.01.11. Calls can remain anonymous.<sup>45</sup>

**BOTSWANA**

**November 23, 2018**

**Okavango Delta, North-West District, Botswana**

Carcass of a white rhinoceros found. Horns cut off. The crime allegedly occurred one week ago.<sup>46</sup>

**14-15 January 2019**

**Moremi Game Reserve, North West District, Botswana**

Discovery of 2 carcasses on Mombo Island in the Okavango Delta. The rate of poaching is increasing, one per month according to official information. Some observers say that the outbreak of poaching coincide with the government's decision to stop arming surveillance patrols with automatic weapons. National poachers or those from neighboring countries are reported to move through the delta with an increased sense of security and even superiority.<sup>47</sup>

**NAMIBIA**

**November 10, 2018**

**Hardap Region, Namibia**

A dehorned rhinoceros carcass was found. Nearby, a seriously injured rhinoceros received veterinary care. The exact location of the poaching was not released, for security reasons.<sup>48</sup>

**CENTRAL AFRICA**

**TCHAD**

**October 15, 2018**

**Zakouma National Park, Guerat and Salamat Regions, Chad**

Another failure in the relocation of rhinoceroses (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 44, n°8 p. 59, n°9 p. 61, n°17 p. 106, n°22 p. 76). Two of the 6 specimens died 6 months after being transported from South Africa, 4800 km away (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 78). All assumptions are open in the search for an explanation for the deaths, which are not due to poaching but cannot be considered "natural."<sup>49</sup>

**ASIA**

**CHINA**

**October 6, 2018**

**Hong Kong International Airport, China.**

Seizure of 2.9 kg of presumed horns worth an estimated 590,000 HK\$ (75,200 US\$), or 25,930 US\$/kg, according to the local customs authorities. The case involved a young man, 27 years old, coming off a plane from Johannesburg. He risks a sentence of up to 10 years in prison and 10 million HK\$ (1.28 million US\$) in fines.<sup>50</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Hong Kong, China**

Sentencing of Wei Bin, 21 years old, a carpenter by profession, to 8 months' imprisonment for trying to smuggle 3.1 kg of horns cut into pieces (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 79). Wei Bin explained that he had agreed to his boss's request to transport "the goods" to mainland China in exchange for some benefits such as the payment of air tickets and other travel expenses.<sup>51</sup>



**November 23, 24, and 27, 2018  
Hong Kong, China**

- Antiques, in particular some ceremonial cups, presumably made of rhinoceros horn, were taken off the market by the British auction house Bonhams. "Bonhams stands behind the professionalism and expertise of its specialists. We do, however, recognize there are widely held concerns about this issue and have decided that the sale of the rhinoceros carvings will not take place. In the future, Bonhams will not offer artefacts made entirely or partly from rhinoceros horn in its salerooms," Bonhams chief executive Matthew Girling said in a statement.
- Removal from auction of 3 horns and an announcement from Sotheby's that they will no longer sell horns or objects made of horn. According to the initial interpretation, the decision is applicable in all of the company's auction houses.
- China Guardian, a Chinese art auction house, announced that it, too, would stop selling horns and objects made of horns.<sup>52</sup>

**January 2019**

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

Seizure of 4 rhino horns, for a total weigh of 2.7 kg, hidden in cake and chocolate packages.<sup>53</sup>



**INDIA**

**October 5, 2018  
Jorhat, State of Assam, India**

Traffickers, forger or story-teller? Ranjit Kalita (34 years old) and Habib Barik were arrested by the police in possession of a "rhino horn" they wanted to sell for 8 million rupees (110,000 US\$). But they claim to have carved it out of bamboo... The object was to be examined in the State forensic laboratory.<sup>54</sup>

**October 7, 2018  
Rowmari, Darrang District, State of Assam, India**  
Police got their hands on 2 rhino poachers deemed "notorious": Sailendra Kemprai (40 years old) and Khairul Jaman (32 years old). Arrested near the Rowmari bazaar, they were carrying a .303 caliber rifle, a magazine, 5 rounds of ammunition, a silencer, a bottle containing a dark liquid suspected to be tranquilizer and 4 syringes.<sup>55</sup>

**October 9, 2018  
Sitalmari, Darrang District, State  
of Assam, India**



The special task force of State police had heard of a poachers' camp site near the Orang Wildlife Sanctuary. When they were uncovered at around 1:20 a.m. gunfire broke out. Some of the poachers disappeared into the night but 2 of them were shot. A search of the camp's surroundings led to the discovery of a .303 caliber rifle, a silencer, a swimming tube and a bag. The Deputy Superintendent of Police Birinchi Bora and a magistrate went to the Sitalmari police station and carried out filmed interrogations in presence of local witnesses. The bodies of the 2 poachers were sent for autopsies.<sup>56</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE  
October 20, 2018**

**Biswanath District, State of Assam, India**

Soibur Rahman had been wanted since June 11, the day he poached a rhino in the Kaziranga National Park. A tip-off enabled the police and forest guards to arrest him this Saturday on a road around Sootea. Soibur Rahman had already been involved in rhino poaching in 2016.<sup>57</sup>

**November 15, 2018  
Biswanath District, State of Assam, India**

Dilwar Hussain, involved in a case of poaching in the Kaziranga Park, was elected to the head of the local government in Suwaguri, in the Biswanath district. The district president tried in vain to invalidate the nomination. "We cannot do anything about it, the people voted for him." Hussain refuses to comment. His supporters say that he has repented.<sup>58</sup>

**December 22, 2018  
Rupohihat, Nagaon District, State of Assam,  
India**

A rhino shot dead and amputated. "The poachers disguised themselves as tourists."<sup>59</sup>

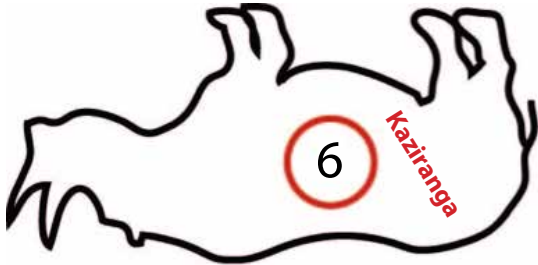
**December 25, 2018  
Gorumara National Park, Jalpaiguri District,  
State of West Bengal, India**

It had been almost 2 years since the last rhino poaching in the National Park. The truce ended with the find of the body of a male adult whose horn had been sawn off. A bullet wound was visible but vets do not rule out that he may have been first anesthetized or poisoned. Investigations ended with the arrest of 3 suspects.<sup>60</sup>

**January 2, 2019**

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

Night-time arrest of 3 men armed for rhino poaching (.303 rifle with silencer and night vision glasses, ammunition, axe, dagger and food). They were about to enter the Agaratoli sector of the park. Six rhinos were poached in the park in 2018 compared to 18 in 2017.<sup>61</sup>



**January 23, 2019**

**Amoni, Nagaon District, Assam State, India**

Arrest of 3 alleged poachers. Seizure of their vehicle and several documents considered incriminating.<sup>62</sup>

**INDONESIA**

**November 28, 2018**

**Bandar Lampung, Lampung Province, Indonesia**

The Sumatran rhinoceros horn weighs approximately 200 g. The 2 suspects, Din Martin Salim and Abdul Kodir, were arrested at a hotel. The former claims to be the driver, and the latter to be the seller. The owner, a certain Manat, lives in the village Kaur Selatan and is sought after by the police.<sup>63</sup>

**NEPAL**

**GANG / REPEATED OFFENSE**

**October 3, 2018**

**Chitwan District, Region n°3, Nepal**

Ishwori Prasad Mahato had been on the run since his conviction to 5 years in prison and a 50,000-rupees (428 US\$) fine on June 24, 2014 for having poached a rhino with 6 accomplices in the Chitwan National Park buffer zone. He was hiding in India, in a village near the border. Meanwhile, 2 gang members, Mukti Prasad Guraun and Hiralal Mardaniya, had been caught. Mahato made the mistake of coming back to Nepal. He had been followed for a month and a half. He admitted that his gang was guilty of the poaching of 2 rhinos which horns were sold for 200,000 rupees (1712 US\$) and 100,000 rupees (856 US\$). 70 rhino poachers are still on the wanted list in Nepal.<sup>64</sup>

**November 27, 2018**

**Chitwan District, Province No. 3, Nepal**



Conviction of a 40-year-old Indian national from Bihar State for poaching a rhino in Chitwan National Park and a fine of 500,000 rupees (4,400 US\$) against Rama Mahato, his alleged accomplice who formally denies his participation in the crime. He lives in the village of Madi, where a demonstration was held 2 days after the trial to protest against wildlife intrusions. On November 28, 2 women were reportedly trampled to death by an elephant. The villagers demand financial compensation for the bereaved families superior to the one million rupees (8,800 US\$) paid to each of them by the park management.<sup>65</sup>

**January 1, 2019**

**Dhangadhi, Sudurpashchim Pradesh Province, Nepal. Border with India.**

Seizure of a 1.29 kg horn smuggled in from Uttar Pradesh, India. The province is on the smugglers' roadmap to Tibet via the Taklakot border post in Darchula district. Arrest of Chakra Bhandari, 51 years old.<sup>66</sup>



**THAILAND**

**November 20, 2018**

**Samut Prakan, Samut Prakan Province, Thailand**

A deputy-prosecutor and 2 women were sentenced to 4 years in prison. The deputy-prosecutor had tried to use his authority and corruption to facilitate the entry of the 2 women who were coming from Africa with bags containing 49 kg of horn, estimated by local customs to be worth 1.4 million US\$, or 28,570 US\$/kg.<sup>67</sup>

## TURKEY

**December 8, 2018**

### **Istanbul Atatürk International Airport, Marmara Region, Turkey**

Seizure of 34 kg of horns valued at 2.2 million US\$ (64,705/kg US\$) from the belongings of a Vietnamese passenger travelling from Mozambique to Ho Chi Minh City. The trafficker's numerous trips between Africa and Viet Nam had put customs officials on alert. They were resolutely waiting for him.<sup>68</sup>



## VIET NAM

**October 12, 2018**

### **Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Viet Nam**

Arriving on October 4 on a Qatar Airways flight coming from South Africa via Doha, the cardboard box was still in the freight zone of the airport when customs inspected it. The sender listed on the bill of lading was the Exquisite Global Shipping & Logistics company, addressed to Suite 101, Kempton Park, Johannesburg and the receiver a certain Truong Van Nam in the rural District of Soc Son, province of Hanoi. Customs opened the parcel in the presence of the handler's and Qatar Airways' representatives. Lucky guess: it contained 13 rhino horns of all sizes and small cups made of horn for a total weight of 34 kg. Samples have been taken to determine precisely which species were massacred.<sup>69</sup>



## EUROPE

## FRANCE

**October 2018**

### **Hérault Department, France**

Seizure by the ONCFS (French national hunting and wildlife service) of a 75-cm-long horn for sale on the Internet. The seller did not provide any explanation on the origin, and had used a foreign website to post his advertisement. His home was searched after a year-long investigation.<sup>70</sup>

**October 19, 2018**

### **Doué-la-Fontaine, Maine-et-Loire department, France**



Death of a 28-year-old male black rhino following a sperm collection operation to artificially inseminate a 20-year-old female. Three years ago, the birth of a baby was announced. It followed a natural childbirth. But the baby had died a few hours after his birth.<sup>71</sup>

The zoo management has informed Robin des Bois that the rhino will be naturalised and exhibited with a reproduction of its horns at the Museum of Natural History in Bordeaux. His authentic horns will also be presented separately and with a secure layout to avoid theft.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

**Mid-December 2018**

### **Prague, Region of Bohemia, Czech Republic**

Three individuals were arrested for attempting to fraudulently export a white rhinoceros horn worth approximately 100,000 US\$, with the help of an "Asian" accomplice.<sup>72</sup>

## ROYAUME UNI

**October 8, 2018**

### **United Kingdom**

The Save the Rhino International report reveals that, of the 300 alleged antiquities for sale on the Internet and in auction rooms in the United Kingdom in 2017 – libatory cups, engraved or carved horns, cups, and other table or decorative objects – 288 or 89% were not accompanied by certificates of origin proving that they had been made before 1947. Only antiquities prior to this date may be marketed in accordance with European regulations. This lack of documentation opens the door to the laundering of recently poached rhino horns. According to the NGO, during the first 7 months of 2018, offers to sell concerned 338 objects made of rhino horn compared to 91 in 2017, an increase of more than 370%.<sup>73</sup>

# Rhinos and Elephants

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**December 21, 2018**

#### **Roodepoort, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Two Chinese nationals were arrested and charged with drug trafficking and possession of ivory and rhinoceros horn.<sup>1</sup>

**January 26, 2019**

#### **Germiston, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Raid of an anti-drug squad on a local shop and seizure of a rhino horn, a halved tusk, a fragment of elephant skin and a small kilo of dagga. Two arrests.<sup>2</sup>



## NAMIBIA

**January 1, 2019**

#### **Namibia**

In 2018, 57 rhinos and 26 elephants were poached in Namibia. Arrests of 120 poachers, according to official statistics.<sup>4</sup>



## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**December 12, 2018**

#### **Oakdale, State of California, United States of America**

Seizure at the home of Chang Xiong and his wife Ma Chang of numerous items in rhinoceros horn and elephant ivory, such as a snuff box, cane knobs and a carved tusk. Rhinoceros feet, toenails and a horn were also seized among the items. The investigation had begun in May 2016, when Xiong tried to purchase rhinoceros feet from a US Fish and Wildlife agent posing as a seller.<sup>5</sup>

## SOUTH AFRICA / MOZAMBIQUE

### **Mozambique - South Africa**

#### **The mystery of the .375 and .416 Safari classic.**

Rangers, private anti-poaching militias and reserve managers have noticed for the past 10 years that the large guns abandoned on the ground by poachers are mostly Safari Classic manufactured by CZ, a Czech Republic weapons manufacturer based in Uherský Brod. Some of them bear the stamp "CZ-USA, Kansas City".

The "CZ-USA, Kansas City" continue to be recovered from wildlife battlefields in Southern and Eastern Africa although the parent company in the Czech Republic has been informed since 2015. At least 100 Safari Classic presumed to be "made in USA" are currently being used as evidence in ongoing trials.

The Czech manufacturer's explanations are unclear. In an e-mail sent to the New York Times, the company's spokesman stated that all weapons are manufactured in the Czech Republic and that for the American market the stamp "CZ USA" is added. It also stated that the American subsidiary did not sell everything on the American market and the surplus was sold abroad, including in Mozambique.

According to Protrack (see "On the Trail" n°15, p. 40, n°13 p. 71, n°6 p. 63, n°6 p. 104), CZ "made in USA" were found on poaching scenes or in poachers' homes from 2011.

CZ declines any responsibility for the use of its weapons after they have been sold. The United States Commerce Department and The Department of Homeland Security are investigating. The United States has so far spent 150 million US\$ a year to combat poaching, with US Fish and Wildlife agents stationed in southern Africa to help governments and their services curb the scourge.

On the French website of the Gamefair exhibition, a weapons and hunting equipment exhibition scheduled from 14 to 16 June 2019 in Lamotte-Beuvron in the Loir-et-Cher Department, there is the following quote: "The Czech CZ is launching a second version of its 550 Safari Classic rifle for hunting dangerous animals from the Black Continent." The same website says that the butt of the weapon is made of Turkish walnut with an ebony front.<sup>3</sup>



ASIA

CHINA

Early October 2018

Jilin, Hebei and Heilongjiang Provinces, Municipality of Beijing, China

Seizure of 26 rhinoceros horns and 110 worked ivories, worth a total of nearly 3 million US\$. 18 people were arrested. The horns were sold for between 10,000 US\$ (1<sup>st</sup> middleman) and 40,000 US\$ (final purchaser).<sup>6</sup>

January 15, 2019

Jinghong, Yunnan Province, China

One arrest for possession of worked ivories and rhino horn objects. Since 2017, Chen had been selling these items on WeChat. Two accomplices were then arrested.<sup>7</sup>



January 29 and 30, 2019

Dongxing Port, Guangxi Province, China. Border with Viet Nam.

Seizure in the hand luggage of a female passenger of 32 worked ivories and 2 fragments of suspected rhino horn.<sup>8</sup>



INDIA

January 5, 2019

Jalpaiguri district, State of West Bengal, India

Arrest of 3 Bhutanese citizens for illegally detaining a 500g ivory tusk and a 1kg rhino horn. Both were to be sold in Nepal for 40,000 US\$.<sup>9</sup>

Elephants



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

"On the Trail" n°23  
Black market raw ivory quotation  
from media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Uganda	713	4*
	Kenya	1,000	6
		1,960	13
		1,000	33
	Malawi	1,370	40
	Zimbabwe	170	59
Asia	South Africa	410	71
	China	120/900	7*
	India	2,715	5**

\* Cf. chapter "Pangolins, Rhinoceroses and Elephants"

\*\* Cf. chapter "Felines and Elephants"

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

Early October 2018

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

Rescue of a female with a dagger inserted in her skull. Anesthesia. Extraction of the long blade, nearly twice the size of a hand. No apparent fracture. Relatively favourable prognosis.<sup>1</sup>





**Early October 2018  
Kenya**

21 kg of raw ivory were seized and thereby taken off the black market on the very day that a CITES restricted committee decided to exempt Kenya from the NIAP (National Ivory Action Plan), which requires an annual report on actions undertaken to reduce and sanction poaching and transnational ivory trading. NGOs believe that exempting Kenya from the NIAP is premature and careless. Mombasa is the main wildlife smuggling port in East Africa and Central Africa. Chinese traffickers, under the pretext of various professions related to commerce, restaurants or public works, have set up shops in the country and in neighboring countries. The prison sentences for ivory trafficking have been reduced by the highest courts. The trials of public figures involved in trafficking are postponed for so long that public opinion tends to forget about them.<sup>2</sup>

**Beginning October 2018  
County of Tharaka-Nithi, Kenya**

Sentencing of Lawrence Mugambi Irungu and Erastus Mugambi to 6 years prison and 2 million shillings (20,000 US\$) in fine for having on 26 February 2017 unlawfully held 5 tusk sections (15kg). They are in preventive detention. They have pleaded for the court indulgence putting forward they are the only ones that can provide for their families.<sup>3</sup>



**October 11, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

Hofmeyr was patrolling. He spots a man taking a nap under a tree. He goes to warn him of the danger. "There are wild animals here, they could attack you." "A lion could eat you." "There is heavy poaching here." Just at that moment, Hofmeyr is hit with an arrow in his right cheek from an unseen shooter in the bushes. The duo was on the lookout. They were waiting for a prey to wander by.<sup>4</sup>



**October 17, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

A mother and 2 children she still was caring for was heavily disabled by the inflicted wound from an arrow. Successful intervention of the veterinarian Task Force of the DSWT/KWS.<sup>5</sup>



**October 17, 2018  
Kapenguria, County of West Pokot, Kenya**

Seizure of 6 tusks (64 kg). Value: 1000 US\$/kg. Three arrests.<sup>6</sup>

**October 21, 2018  
Diani Beach, County of Kwale, Kenya**

Seizure of raw ivory on Pango (29 years old) and Mwamadi (33 years old). Told value: 1.9 million shillings (19,000 US\$).<sup>7</sup>

**October 25, 2018  
Angata Rongai, County of Samburu, Kenya**

23 kg. Eight tusk sections. Two million Shilling (19,700 US\$, i.e. 860 US\$/kg). Arrest of Don Mawiri Mbaabu and Cyrus Kipng'etich Koech. Release is possible on bail for 5 million Shilling (50,000 US\$).<sup>8</sup>

**October 28, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy and Mara North Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

Rescue by the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and KWS of 4 elephants among which a female hit by 20 arrows shot by farmers.<sup>9</sup>



**October to November 2018  
Masai Mara National Reserve,  
Narok County, Kenya**

According to MEP (Mara Elephant Project), 11 elephant deaths between beginning of September 2018 and end of November



could be attributed to intentional poisoning by pesticides. The autopsy results are not convincing. Nevertheless, they exclude the possibility of an epizootic disease. Conflicts between shepherds and elephants have been plenty over the last quarter of 2018. A ranger on patrol was killed by an elephant in the Rumuruti forest. Farmers abandoned their crops by the side of the Ngare Narok after damages made by elephants.

A cabbage planting covering 0.8 ha worth 500,000 shillings (4,930 US\$) was ravaged by elephants just as was a tomato planting over 1.2 ha worth 600,000 shillings (5,900 US\$).

Man/elephant coexistence inside the national wildlife reserve heated tensions on both sides. The elephants whose habitat is fragmented and colonized by fences and other deterrent means are deemed the aggressors. Retaliation falls upon them, traps, spears, bullets, pesticides. The tusks are ripped off post-mortem and join the dark field of speculation.



The Governor of the County of Narok, for his part, denies any elephant poisoning campaign, says that poaching in the county is quite the exception, that the causes of death of the elephants are "natural" and reminds that according to officials, there were 1400 elephants in Masai Mara in 1983 and 3,500 now.<sup>10</sup>

**TEA LEAF NETWORK  
FAMILY AFFAIRS  
November 2018**

**Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya**

The 2015 case of smuggling from Mombasa to Thailand in of 511 tusks in a container declared to contain tea leaves is not settled (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 77, n°10 p. 57, and n°13 p. 95). Kenya intends to summon 5 Thai witnesses, including officials who intercepted the tusks, to complete the case against Abdulrahman Mahmoud, his sons Sheikh and Abdulrahman and Lucy Muthoni, Musa Lithare, Samuel Mundia, Salim Mohammed, Abbasi Rashid and Kenneth Njuguna. The brothers Nicholas and Samuel Jefwa are also targeted by this procedure (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 77, n°13 p. 95 and n°15 p. 88).<sup>11</sup>

**Beginning November 2018  
Mwarak, Laikipia County, Kenya**

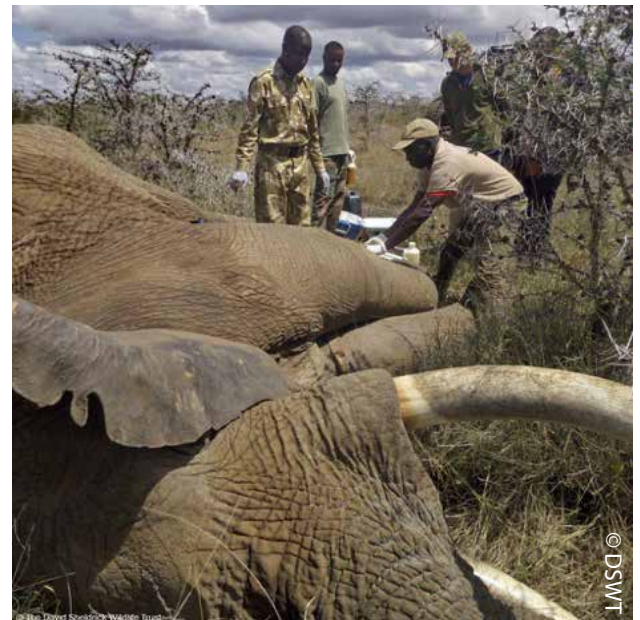
21 tusk sections. 547 kg. Five arrests. Their final destination was Nairobi, 250 km away.<sup>12</sup>

**November 6, 2018  
Nakuru, Nakuru County, Kenya**

Seizure of 13 kg of raw ivory. Value: 2.6 million US\$ i.e. 25,500 US\$ (1,960 US\$/kg). Arrest of Samuel Wahome and Hillary Kiplangat.<sup>13</sup>

**November 13, 2018  
Near Rumuruti, Laikipia County, Kenya**

Medical treatment for a large male elephant. A witness observed him limping and bleeding from fis from left leg. The bullet wound was cleaned, oxygenated water, iodine, clay. Prognosis is optimistic.<sup>14</sup>



**November 21, 2018**  
**Near the Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**

There was no other solution but to finish off this female elephant in the river bed, there where she was lying down after being hit by 2 or 3 poisoned arrows. She was half paralysed and despite the efforts of the vets from Elephant Aware and KWS, the final solution painfully imposed itself.<sup>15</sup>



**November 23, 2018**  
**Mathira, Nyeri County, Kenya**

Nocturnal arrest of Solomon Macharia and Robinson Kamau. They were in possession of 2 tusks worth 20,000 US\$.<sup>16</sup>

**November 29, 2018**  
**Meru County, Kenya**

Sentencing of Joseph Muriithi to 20 million shillings (200,000 US\$) in fine or if he fails to pay to a lifetime prison sentence for possession of 2 tusks worth 900,000 shillings (8,700 US\$). Muriithi has 14 days to form an appeal.<sup>17</sup>



**December 4, 2018**  
**Tsangatsini, Kilifi County, Kenya**

Arrest of Changawa Koi Kaisha, 55, in a forest where he had planned a meeting with potential buyers to negotiate the sale of 55 kg of raw ivory making up 11 tusk sections. The buyers were KWS agents. Is the seller's bracelet also ivory?<sup>18</sup>



**December 13, 2018**  
**Kibwezi, Makueni County, Kenya**

Two wrapped presents. Two million shilling (19,760 US\$, i.e. 1,976 US\$/kg). Two immediate summary trials.<sup>19</sup>



**December 2018**  
**Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya**

Rescue of an elephant-female, about 20 years old, wounded by a projectile weapon. Surgical operation fulfilled by Elephant Aware, KWS and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.<sup>20</sup>



## The Daily Lives of Tsavo Vets

### - November 12, 2018.

Aerial field reconnaissance by the DSWT. The mobile veterinarian team arrived on site by helicopter. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from the air. The elephant collapsed after 9 minutes in a position that made it possible to help breathing and to spray him with water. A poisoned arrowhead was extracted by forceps.



The wound was cleaned and disinfected. Sprayed with oxytetracycline. Covered with green clay. Waking by 3 intravenous injections of dexamethasone. The elephant stood up on his own and slowly walked away. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>21</sup>

- **November 16, 2018.** A photo safari guide reported an adult male elephant with an abdominal wound, crossing a path with difficulty. The mobile veterinary team arrived on the scene very quickly. The elephant was soon identified in the shade of a tree. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from an off-road vehicle. The team slowly directed the elephant toward a clearing. After 10 minutes, he fell unconscious in a favorable position. The wound, caused by an arrow, was cleaned and disinfected. Treatment administered directly to the injury. In the absence of any risk of generalized infection, no antibiotics were injected. Waking by 3 injections of 18 mg of M5050.<sup>22</sup>



- **November 17, 2018.** Reporting by the manager of a lodge. Surgical operation on 2 injured male lions. They were apparently wounded by a buffalo attack. When the veterinary unit arrived on site, they found the pride in the shade of a tree, along with the 2 injured lions. They were shot with syringes of 200 mg of ketamine and 2 mg of medetomidine. Total immobilization after 5 minutes. Local administration of antibiotics. Stitches. Waking by atipamezole. Lions under surveillance. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>23</sup>



- **November 18, 2018.** A DSWT team reported an adult male elephant with an abdominal injury. A mobile veterinary unit arrived on site. The elephant was identified in the shade of a tree. He was directed toward a clearing. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from the helicopter. The elephant fell in a position that made it possible to help him breathe and to cool him down by spraying his ears with water. An old arrow was found in his abdomen. The scar tissue had formed a tumor. Surgical excision impossible. Local treatment with hydrogen peroxide, iodine solution and oxytetracycline. Consciousness regained through 3 injections of 18 mg of M5050. Prognosis uncertain.<sup>24</sup>

- **November 19, 2018.** A DSWT aerial patrol spotted a wounded elephant among a group of 5. Male adult. Immobilized by M99 anesthesia. He was kept in an open area until he fell asleep. Position was good for helping him breathe and keeping him cool by spraying his ears with water. Abscess and tumors found on the abdomen. Local treatment with hydrogen peroxide, iodine solution and oxytetracycline. Antidote given to revive the animal. The elephant stood back up and walked away calmly. Prognosis uncertain. Causes of pathologies undetermined.<sup>25</sup>

- **November 23, 2018.** Reported by park authorities. Carcass found through aerial field reconnaissance. Adult male. The mobile veterinary unit arrived on site in a four-wheel drive vehicle. The tusks had been cut off. The perineal zone was partially eaten by scavengers. Deep wound in the rib cage. Four ribs broken. Internal hemorrhaging. Probable cause of death: projectile weapon shot from a high platform. Indisputably poaching.<sup>26</sup>



- **November 23, 2018.** In the Watamu Marine Park, search for a turtle with cancerous tumors on the neck, head and fins. Reported by divers. Sighting confirmed by the KWS. Impossible to dive due to bad weather. Local inhabitants say that landfill are overflowing in Mombasa and that waste scatters at sea and partly drifts northward to the Watamu Park.<sup>27</sup>

- **November 24, 2018.** Rescue of an adult male elephant. Anesthesia, disinfection and green clay protection of an old wound caused by an arrow in the right side. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>28</sup>



- **November 28, 2018.** Emergency intervention at dusk on an adult elephant. KWS helicopter used to reach the-site. Assistance from personnel of a nearby lodge. Anesthesia. A spear piercing the skull 30 cm deep was extracted. No lesions on vital organs or arteries. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>29</sup>

- **November 30, 2018.** Reported by the park authorities. Carcass spotted by aerial reconnaissance. The mobile veterinary unit arrived on site in a 4x4. Adult male. The carcass was lying on the right side. The head was severed. The tusks were missing. Death had occurred more than 7 days earlier. Given the advanced state of decay and the intensity of scavengers' activity, it is impossible to determine the cause of death. Carcass covered with branches.<sup>30</sup>



- **December 3, 2018. Amboseli National Park.** An adult male known as Tim got stuck in a swamp. Reported by villagers. A mobile veterinary unit drove 200 km to the site. Initial attempts to pull the elephant out using 200-meter ropes and a tractor were unsuccessful. Assistance from the NGO Big Life. After struggling for 4 hours, Tim was taken out of the mud using a 300-meter rope pulled by a tractor together with the vets' Land Cruisers. Crowding villagers were difficult to control and disturbed the rescue mission.<sup>31</sup>

**January 6, 2019**  
**Between Lamu County and Tsavo West National Park, Kenya**  
 Joint operation by KWS, Air Wing and DSWT to treat a male elephant hit by a poisoned arrow. Favorable prognosis.<sup>32</sup>



**January 8, 2019**

**Kajiado, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Simon Kangethe Mukiri, Boniface Waigwa Wanjiru and Juma Lekupe do not know how 50 kg of raw ivory in the form of 4 tusks worth an estimated 5 million shillings (50,000 US\$) arrived in the trunk of their car. They say they discovered it when the roadblock intercepted them in Kitengela. The court is demanding the payment of a 50,000 US\$ bail for their release pending trial.<sup>33</sup>

**Late January 2019**

**Nakuru County, Kenya**

Andrew Yegon and Joseph Karani were sentenced to 5 years in prison or 9,900 US\$ in fine for illegally detaining 2 baby elephant tusks. Their total weight is 2kg and they are estimated at 4,940 US\$ or 2,470 US\$ per kilo.<sup>34</sup>



**January 30, 2019**

**Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

Arrest of Atanas Nzioka for illegal detention of 6 elephant tusks weighing a total of 11kg.<sup>35</sup>

**January 2019**

**Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

Since its first publication in 2013, "On the Trail" has noted that Narok County is a hell for elephants.

- January 8<sup>th</sup>. A carcass.
  - January 9<sup>th</sup>. A carcass spotted by a rangers' patrol. A young male. The tusks are in place. No apparent signs of injuries. The vultures are here. No secondary mortality proving carcass toxicity.
  - January 15<sup>th</sup>. A carcass spotted by park management. A young male. Same findings as on January 9.
  - January 16. A carcass spotted by a rangers' patrol. An adult male. Same findings as on 9 and 15 January.
  - January 21 in the morning. A carcass spotted by a patrol of rangers. An adult female. Same findings as on 9, 15 and 16 January.
  - January 21 (again). A carcass spotted by villagers. An adult female. Same observations as on the morning of 21 and on the 9, 15 and 16 January
- The tusks were recovered by the KWS according to the protocol in force. Autopsies are not always possible because of the sometimes advanced decomposition of the bodies. At the top of the KWS hierarchy, in the veterinary profession, among protected area managers and NGOs, pesticides are pointed out. In all forms - in bags, cans, after spreading, after spraying - they dominate ecosystems because of the uncontrolled development of vegetable and cereal crops. Elephants can be poisoned by drinking contaminated water, eating poisoned seeds, succumbing to toxic ambushes.



Park management reminds people that in addition to this unfortunate series of January 2019, 25 elephants have been treated by veterinary teams since June 2018 after being targeted by rifle bullets, poisoned arrows and spears. It calls on common sense and testimony to understand all the causes of the crisis and to fix it.<sup>36</sup>

**MALAWI**

**Beginning November 2018**

**Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve, Northern Region, Malawi. Border to Zambia.**

Discovery of a dead elephant with his tusks cut off. Kathryn Kachimanga speaking in the name of the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust is worried for the constant rise in poaching. "Just 30 years ago 2000 elephants could be found there, but today only 48 remain." Poachers targeting elephants or other protected animals are now liable for up to 30 years prison and fines as high as 15 million kwachas (20,600 US\$).<sup>37</sup>

**November 29, 2018**

**Mchinji District, Malawi. Border to Zambia and Mozambique.**

8,4 kg of raw ivory. Arrest of Henry Anthony given in to police by well-intentioned and well-informed citizens.<sup>38</sup>

**December 7, 2018**

**Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi**

Arrest of Allan Nyirenda and Robins Kayira for possession and trade of 2 raw ivories (910 g). They were attempting to sell them for 1,030 US\$.<sup>39</sup>

**Early January 2019**

**Chikwawa, South Region, Malawi**

Arrest of 3 traffickers carrying 12 kg of raw ivory. Value of 12 million kwachas or 16,500 US\$ and 1,370 US\$/kg.<sup>40</sup>

**Late January 2019**

**Nkhotakota, Central Region, Malawi**

Arrest of Master Banda (47 years old) and Philemon Banda (22 years old) for illegally detaining 26.5 kg of elephant tusks. They ded to sell them back.<sup>41</sup>

**MOZAMBIQUE**

**End of October 2018**

**Province of Niassa, Mozambique**

Arrest of Pedro Vicente, ex head of the province's wildlife management. He his suspected of having stolen 85 ivory tusks from government stocks in 2017. According to national park data, the country lost 10,000 elephants since 2009.<sup>42</sup>

**End of November 2018  
Niassa National Reserve,  
Province of Niassa, Mozambique.  
Border to Tanzania.**

A massacre with traps. Left hind leg has been grinded for one, 2 or maybe even 3 months. Treatment dispensed by the vet from Saving the Survivors. The prognosis is uncertain for this lonely adult female.<sup>43</sup>



**End of November 2018  
Moamba District, Province of Maputo,  
Mozambique**

Arrest of 2 individuals suspected of poaching and shooting to death of a ranger in Kruger Park in July (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 79) after they had broken into the Park carrying an AK47. Crossfire broke out with a patrol. One of the suspects claims to belong to the regular army.<sup>44</sup>

**Early January 2019  
Nampula, Nampula Province, Mozambique**

Arrest of 3 members of a gang of traffickers. Seven tusks were seized, as well as 40 kg of precious stones and counterfeit notes.<sup>45</sup>

**UGANDA**

**October 21, 2018  
Kidepo Valley National Park,  
Northern Region, Uganda.  
Border to South Sudan.**

A member of the LDU (Local Defence Unit) would have been killed in an elephant charge during a poaching campaign in company of 2 colleagues. His body was found next to an AK47 and ammunition.<sup>46</sup>



**November 2018  
Uganda**

Uganda faced with man-elephant conflict. According to the UWA press, an electric fence will be installed by 2020 all around Murchison Falls national park. Cost of the project is evaluated at 13 million US\$. The UWA received a first donation of 15,000 US\$ from the NGO Space for Giants. Rural communities are recruited to dig ditches 2m wide and 2m deep. Rangers say that the smell of corn, sugar cane, sorgho, mil, bananas, mangos, jackfruit and watermelon attract the elephants and other animals outside the park's boundaries. Bus accidents because of collisions with elephants have left many wounded. 20% of income from the park's entry are allocated to compensation for neighboring communities victims of animals intrusions. The UWA has allocated 211 million shillings (2 million US\$) to the Kiryandongo district for the fiscal year 2017-2018.

In the rock and swamp areas where raising a fence is impossible, local inhabitants are encouraged to breed bees and plant red pepper. Open air burning of cow dung and red pepper are deemed to ward off elephants. According to the coordinator of the bee project implemented since 2010, 638 swarms from Kenya and 1500 local swarms are spread out around the park's edges. 67 villages gain profit from selling the honey.<sup>47</sup>

**RWANDA**

**October 2018  
Kigali, Rwanda**

Dismissal by the Kigali Court of Appeal of the annulment appeal of Révérien Nshimiyimana's sentence of 10 years in prison for ivory trafficking. Nshimiyimana, a taxi driver, says he was a regular police informant. His involvement in trafficking and the discovery of tusks in the home of someone he knows would be part of his mission as a double agent. The Court of Appeal dismissed this argument, expressing particular surprise that it had not been developed at first instance.

The 6 men were arrested in 2015 in the Eastern Province. They said they had collected elephant tusks and intended to "sell them to Rome through Catholic priests". Two were acquitted. Two of his accomplices sentenced to 4 years in prison were pardoned by the President of the Republic. One was sentenced to 4 years in prison and did not appeal. For the time being, Révérien remains in prison.<sup>48</sup>

## TANZANIA

### **GANG/FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**October 10, 2018**

**Dodoma, Dodoma Region, Tanzania**

Judicial proceedings of 2 brothers, Boniface Mathew Malyango and Luca Mathew Malyango.



Arrested on October 29, 2015 in the suburbs of Dar es Salam after being tracked for over a year. They are suspected of attempting to smuggle 118 tusks. Boniface, 47 years old, is considered to be the main organizer of a network that is active in Tanzania, in Zambia, in Mozambique and in Kenya. He was apparently in contact with the "Queen of Ivory," Yang Feng Glan, who was arrested in November 2015 in Tanzania (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°13 p. 80, n°15 p. 90, n°17 p. 92). He has been nicknamed "the Merciless Devil" by the Dodoma court (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°16 p. 77, n°18 p. 87).

The 2 brothers were sentenced on March 3, 2017 to 12 years in prison for organized trafficking of protected wildlife.

On July 26, 2017, the court of appeal considered that the proof of the involvement of the 2 brothers was insufficiently backed.

On October 10, the first ruling was confirmed by the Supreme Court.<sup>49</sup>

**October 29, 2018**

**Mbomipa Wildlife Management Area, Iringa Rural District, Tanzania**

Indictment for economic sabotage of 9 poachers accused of having killed 6 elephants next to the Ruaha national park between the months of May and June 2018.<sup>50</sup>

**October 30, 2018**

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

Appearance of Akram Abdul Rasool. He is indicted for money laundering and illegal possession of 6 tusks (value 103 million Tanzanian shillings, 45,000 US\$), 70 fire arms and 65 kg of buffalo meat. He is presented as a businessman well known to the region.<sup>51</sup>

### **GANG**

**November 2018**

**Ilala District, Dar es Salam Region, Tanzania**

Sentencing of 3 businessmen, Kigahhey aka Ustadhi, Rashid and Mkunde, to 20 years prison for organized crime and possession of 5 tusks. Announced value: 65 million Tanzanian shillings (28,500 US\$).<sup>52</sup>



**December 9, 2018**

**Dar es Salam, Dar es Salam Region, Tanzania**

Seizure of 20 tusks. Value: 87 million Tanzanian shillings (38,300 US\$). Three arrests including one woman.<sup>53</sup>

## ZAMBIA

**End of December 2018**

**Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia**

Sentencing to 7 years prison with hard labor of a 38-year-old man caught red handed transporting 8 kg of ivory.<sup>54</sup>



**End of December 2018**

**Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia-12**

Sentencing of Morgan Ngulube to 6 years prison and hard labor for unlawful possession of 2 kg of ivory.<sup>55</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**September-December 2018**

**From the Sango Wildlife Conservancy to the Rifa Safari Conservancy (725 km), Zimbabwe**

The Sango Wildlife Conservancy covers 598 km<sup>2</sup>. Landlocked inside the Save Valley Conservancy, it belongs to Wilfried Pabst, a German businessman (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 107). He believes his management for 25 years to be a success. "We are deforested through elephants". "They are destroying their own food base, as well as for many other animals- leaf eaters, in particular". "It was necessary to transfer about one hundred or we would have been forced to kill them"

The Rifa Safari Conservancy is in Norther Zimbabwe near the border to Zambia. It covers 287 km<sup>2</sup>. The operation could be completed within the coming years with rhino transfers. Poaching would be under control there since Emmerson Mnangagwa, the successor of Mugabe, came to power and the implementation by courts of a dissuasive minimal 9-year sentence in cases related to elephant poaching and ivory trafficking.<sup>56</sup>

**October 6, 2018**

**Mana Pools National Park, Province of Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe**

Human/elephant conflict. During the picnics in the park, elephants have gotten into the habit of picking fruit from the passengers' food baskets. One of the apple thieves was reported to authorities. He was treated as a "problem elephant". Guards shot at him. Two days later, on Sunday, his meat was shared among the park's personel. What happened to the ivory?<sup>57</sup>

**Mid-October 2018**

**Chipinge, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe. Border to Mozambique.**

Seizure of 2 tusks in the hands of a 28-year-old man returning from poaching in Sango Ranch.<sup>58</sup>



**October 23, 2018**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks, total weight 55 kg, estimated worth 9,350 US\$ i.e. 170 US\$/kg. Arrest of Isaiah Nhovo and Bishem Nyamukondiwa.<sup>59</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 3 tusks. Arrest of 5 men aged 20 to 42 years old.<sup>60</sup>

#### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**October 29, 2018**

**Chipinge, Province of Manicaland, Zimbabwe**

Arrest of Lovemore and Clemence Sithole. Seizure of 2 tusks. The 2 brothers along with 3 more buddies who were not indicted were preparing to negotiate the sale with 2 undercover agents of the administration. The meeting took place in the Charuma primary school.<sup>61</sup>



**October 2018  
Zimbabwe**

Madzinga and her driver, Pamire, have been in custody since mid-February when they fell into a trap set by photographer, Adrian Steirn and the police (see " On the Trail " n°21 p. 87). They had offered for sale 6 tusks hidden in the trunk of a car in Harare. Their trial has been postponed several times for futile reasons. The most recent is the impossibility of producing evidence due to the unavailability of the court registry guard, the only one holding the keys to the vault. Madzinga and Pamire are demanding their release through their lawyers. They consider that the statutory time limits for the conduct of the trial have expired. According to information that has not yet been consolidated, the traffickers have connections with former First Lady Grace Mugabe and the daughter of the new President Emmerson Mnangagwa.<sup>62</sup>

**November 27, 2018**

**Guruve District, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe**

Dzingai Nyamhungu fell into a trap on April 21. Contacted on his cell phone by 2 rangers interested in purchasing 2 tusks, he gave them a first meeting in a school in Angwa and asked to see the money before showing the tusks. After settling some points of detail about the transaction, the final meeting was set by the side of a road near Angwa and the trap came down on Nyamhungu. He is pleading not guilty. He faces up to 9 years in prison.<sup>63</sup>

**December 2, 2018**

**Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe**

Police custody for 11 people including 9 employees of a Chinese company for possession and attempted trade of 6 tusks, for a total weight of 200 kg carrying the official stamp of the national parks management services.<sup>64</sup>

**Beginning of December 2018**

**Matetsi private game reserve, Matabeleland North Province.**

**Border to Zambia.**

A male elephant is caught in a trap. His front leg holds a very severe wound. Anesthesia. The unconscious animal is rolled over. Disinfection. Reawakening with an antidote. Good work by the Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust.<sup>65</sup>



**January 13, 2019**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Arrest in the suburbs of Harare of 3 men in possession of 2 elephant tusks weighing 18.6 kg.<sup>66</sup>



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**October 12, 2018**

#### **Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

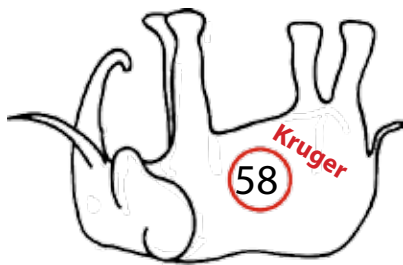
In a second-hand shop in the north of the city, seizure of ivory, a Rolex, raw diamonds, luxury jewelry, cell phones and copies of the identification documents of the sellers and the clients.

As the holidays approach, the police warn the public to be extremely careful when they purchase objects in second-hand shops. "Possession of stolen property is a criminal offense."<sup>67</sup>

**Mid-October 2018**

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

58 elephants poached in the park since the beginning of 2018.<sup>68</sup>



**Mid-October 2018**

#### **Kruger National Park, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Border with Mozambique.**

Major poaching wave in the north of Kruger Park, near the border with Mozambique. WAR shared their observations and Trevor Joste's photo. "We could smell something arriving at the bush camp on day 3 of the trip, and the next morning on the trail we managed to find the poached elephant. The hyenas had already eaten off the trunk. Not a very nice sight for any of us including the ranger." "The carcass was already two days old."<sup>69</sup>

**October 25, 2018**

#### **Xigalo, Limpopo Province, South Africa**



Was it news or propaganda in the Daily Sun, a South African tabloid? Joyful villagers take a break, holding the meatless femur of a freshly slaughtered elephant. The victim was killed by agents from SA Wildlife Trade and Regulations as he crossed the border with Zimbabwe, along with another elephant. The pair was supposedly threatening villagers. Boyza Munyuku, 27 years old, a village resident was enthusiastic. "I'm going to take a break after two months of eating vegetables. It's going to be my fresh meat!"<sup>70</sup>

**On the Trail #23. Robin des Bois**

**November 7, 2018**

#### **Matlosana (Klerksdorp), North West Province, South Africa**

A Toyota bakkie was intercepted. In the back were 6 tusks, 112.7 kg, hidden under bags of corn. Declared value: 46,200 US\$ (410 US\$/kg). Two arrests, Douglas Matambandini and Mmoloki Moseki.<sup>71</sup>



**November 20, 2018**

#### **Sabi Sand Wildtuin, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Major operation at the Sabi Sand Game Park. A large adult male walking with difficulty, a snare wrapped around his trunk, cutting his flesh. WildlifeVets intervened. Anesthesia. Extraction. Disinfection. Application of clay. Prognosis is optimistic.<sup>72</sup>



**November 21, 2018**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Seizure of several dozen objects made of carved or semi-raw ivory, in the home of a Chinese national, whose accomplice was trafficking alabones 2 streets away.<sup>73</sup>



Valued at 2.5 million rand (171,000 US\$).

**November 2018**

**Somerset West, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Seized by the Hawks and the SANEB (South African Narcotics Enforcement Bureau), psychotropic drugs (Mandrax and Tik) worth 8.6 million rand (590,000 US\$) and 2 tusks in a car and at the home of the 2 suspects, aged 27 and 60.<sup>74</sup>



**November 2018**

**Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Human beasts against the wild beasts. Trains cross the reserve (250 km<sup>2</sup>) several times a day to export iron and manganese ore from Limpopo to the rest of the country. The railway predates the creation of the reserve. Ten elephants are reportedly killed every year by train convoys. A total of 90 lions are also said to have been killed in the past 10 years. Leopards and hippopotamuses are fatally wounded. Carcasses on the rails are attacked by hyenas and vultures, some of which are also run over or hurt by passing trains. The elephant tusks must be removed by reserve personnel or they could be taken by gangs, but the operation exposes the rangers to physical danger since the trains are not instructed to stop. The reserve rangers focus their attention on watching vultures circling over the railroad tracks, and can miss vultures circling in other sectors above rhinoceros carcasses. Certain immediate solutions could be implemented, such as systematic reporting of collisions. Reporting would spotlight the problem and enable the rangers to launch clean-up operations immediately at the site of the accident. Reducing train speed has also been suggested, but up until now, the Transnet Freight Rail and loaders have not been in favor of that suggestion. Putting up electric fences on either side of the line would have the double inconvenience of being costly to install and maintain, and it would block the movements of mammals within the reserve. Meetings have been scheduled in the first part of this year to try to solve the problem and reduce the frequency of this mechanical poaching. Craig Spencer, who founded the Black Mambas, a female anti-poaching brigade (see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 56, n°12 p. 84, n°14 p. 65, n°18 p. 108) stated, "We try to develop love for wildlife and to protect the animals, and at the same time, the animals are killed by trains." Spencer is full of ideas to reduce the massacre: improve use of the line parallel to Route 40; cut the vegetation in the ditch on either side of the line regularly because in the winter especially, animals come to graze there; reduce the slope on either side of the line to make it easier for the animals to flee. Collisions between trains and elephants are not specific to the Balule Reserve. It is a nationwide problem, and India is confronted with the same.<sup>75</sup>

**December 3, 2018  
Lenyenye, Limpopo Province,  
South Africa**

Frikkie Kotze, 36 years old, ranger at the Balule Reserve, was sentenced to 50,000 rand (3700 US\$) in fines, or if he fails to pay, 5 years in prison, for having poached an elephant within that same reserve. The 2 sanctions are suspended and accompanied by 5 years of probation. In addition, Kotze will pay 35,000 rand (2600 US\$) to the NGO Elephants Alive.<sup>76</sup>



**December 5, 2018  
South Africa**

A young male was spotted by helicopter. He had collapsed on the savanna. Anesthesia. The wound was nursed. His foot was cut in a trap. Rescue apparently successful.<sup>77</sup>



**Mid-December 2018  
Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Four elephants dead. The LEDET (Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism) has been accused.

The conflict between 4 male elephants and some farmers in the Gravelotte region lasted for a week. The best solution the LEDET had to offer was to shoot them. The NGO Elephants, Rhinos and People (ERP), notified by good-willed local residents, tried to find alternative solutions. When they realized that the so called "rogue elephants" were adult males and that the open cases that they usually use to displace animals were too small, they requested additional time from the LEDET and the farmers, who were unyielding.

Jane Meyer of the NGO Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services said: "There was enormous pressure. Local farmers were turning up saying 'You better move them, we're going to shoot them,' and if not, they were going to be shot by LEDET." It was extremely hot and everyone knows how risky anesthesia is in such conditions. It was a case of "get hot or get shot," added Jane.

Saturday morning at dawn, the 4 pillagers were spotted by helicopter just as the flat-bedded trucks were arriving.

The immobilization procedure began immediately, but by the time the anesthesia was applied, the temperature was already over 40°C. Two of the elephants died when they were awakened by the antidote. Another died on the road to Balule (56 km from Gravelotte) and the last one died on arrival.

"They were just too weak to stand and unable to regulate their own body temperatures effectively while under the anesthetic," noted Jane with regret. Dereck Milburn, ERP manager, is "devastated" by the failure. "We have relocated over 200 elephants and only ever lost 2 before! It was either this or bullets." The LEDET spokesperson was contacted by The Citizen, a local newspaper, but at the time of printing, no response had been received.<sup>78</sup>

**January 9, 2019  
Krugersdorp, Gauteng Province, South Africa**  
Seizure at the home of a woman, whose vehicle was considered suspicious and had been followed by a police patrol, of 4 tusks and suspected narcotics.<sup>79</sup>



**January 28, 2019  
Kruger National Park, Provinces of Limpopo or  
Mpumalanga, South Africa**

The number of poached elephants reached a sad record in 2018, with 71 elephants killed. Transferring rhino poaching to elephant poaching.<sup>80</sup>



**BOTSWANA**

**Mid-December 2018  
Botswana**

Following its major call in Johannesburg in 2016 for all elephants to be included in Appendix I, Botswana is changing course. The elephant has descended from its pedestal. He was designated as the emblematic pillar of tourism and was expected to become a major resource for Botswana. Two years later, he was under pressure of village vindictiveness and pressure from parliamentarians in the north, and then lowered to the rank of a pain in the ass and a killer of old ladies. To the Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration who wants to drill and maintain water points to water and "fix" elephants, people in the north through elected opposition officials say that elephants must be fenced off, or killed, at least those who are "in excess." "These elephants just come from Zimbabwe, cross the border and kill our people and destroy our future crops."<sup>81</sup>

**January 14, 2019**

**Francistown, North East District, Botswana**

Appearance of 5 men: Messrs Ramasauna, Machamce, Mokgathi, Chalashika and Moshati for having transported 4 elephant tusks in an organized gang on 13 November 2018.<sup>82</sup>

**NAMIBIA**

**Mid-October 2018**

**Namibia**

A shocking video was posted on the News24 website, in South Africa. It shows 2 hunters at work in the Nakabolelwa Conservancy in Namibia, in the Zambezi region. They fired without warning at a herd of elephants. The professional hunter tells his client to “shoot straight between the eyes.” An elephant collapses. Another elephant charges the hunters. The director of Namibian national parks, Colgar Sikopo, says that the professional hunter in charge of the operation could have his license revoked. He has been identified. “Sport hunting is part of sustainable wildlife management,” according to the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism. But the MET described the scene as “barbaric.” The official doctrine in sport hunting is that the target should be chosen and tracked, and “excess animals” should be the priority, preferably males.<sup>83</sup>

**December 2, 2018**

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

Elizabeth Mate Linyando was arraigned and released on bail as she awaits trial after being caught red-handed transporting 58 raw diamonds and 2 elephant tusks.<sup>84</sup>

**December 3, 2018**

**Kasheshe, Zambezi Region, Namibia**

Seizure of 6 tusks in a villager storeroom, following information provided by the community. The man was about to cut them up with a saw to facilitate transportation. Their origin and scheduled destination are unknown.<sup>85</sup>



**January 11, 2019**

**Zambezi Region, Namibia**

Bail denied for Paulus Johnson Renin and Usupe Sema Dusken, Angolan and Namibian nationals caught attempting to market 4 elephant tusks of unknown origin.<sup>86</sup>

**January 28, 2019**

**Windhoek, Khomas region, Namibia**

Thomas John Brown van Wyk (44 years old) is released on bail of 3,600 US\$. He had to hand over his passport to the police and must report to the police station from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. He is not allowed to leave Windhoek without police permission. This oncologist is accused of illegally detaining 3 elephant tusks.<sup>87</sup>

**WESTERN AFRICA**

**BENIN**

**October 10, 2018**

**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin**

Seizure through 2 operations of 252 kg of raw ivory: the first batch (183 kg) in a hotel room; the second in the office of Salvador Hounye, a real estate agency manager leading a double life. In his life as an ivory dealer, he worked in connection with accomplices in Togo and in Cote d'Ivoire. The Minister for Quality of Life and Sustainable Development, José Tonato, stated that “the cargo was meant to leave Cotonou by sea or by air, destined for consumer countries.”<sup>88</sup>



**November 26, 2018**

**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin**

Three convictions of 3 months' imprisonment plus a fine of 170 US\$ and damages equivalent to 1,700 US\$. The case dates back to September 28, 2018 when 14 kg of raw ivory was seized from the first convict (see “On the Trail” n°22, p. 94). Immediately afterwards, 2 accomplices were arrested. The second accomplice was arrested in Porto-Novo with 1.69 kg of raw ivory at his home.<sup>89</sup>



**November 29, 2018  
Kandi, Alibori Department,  
Benin**

Three suspended sentences of 5 years in prison and a fine of 520 US\$ which, according to the local press, “disenchants the people involved in the fight against the destruction of wildlife in the Republic of Benin.” In 2018, the 3 men tried to sell the tusks of 8 elephants poached in W Park (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 94). W national park is part of the W Transborder Biosphere Reserve, which extends across over one million hectares of territory in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. For a similar crime in 2017, a man was sentenced by the same court to 5 years in prison and a fine equivalent to 1,390 US\$.<sup>90</sup>



**CENTRAL AFRICA**

**CAMEROON**

**November 30, 2018  
Port Of Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon**

Seizure in the fishing harbor of 125 tusks or tusk sections, and several dozen carved ivories, hidden among bales of second-hand clothes. The 2 Cameroonians and the Nigerian who were also taken in were about to embark for Nigeria. The Cameroon-Nigeria smuggling business is hyperactive by road, as well as by sea (see “On the Trail” n°1 p. 11, n°10 p. 31, p. 58, n°11 p. 19, n°13 p. 42, n°18 p.94, n°19 p. 54, n°22 p. 50).<sup>91</sup>

**GABON**

**October 22-November 26, 2018  
Libreville, Estuaire Province,  
Gabon**

Ngaba Maxime, Kassa Ali and Aba Baba, 3 formidable wildlife delinquents, are no more harmful for a while. Seizure of 2 tusks. However, they were not incapacitated for long. Ngaba received a 3-month suspended sentence. His 2 associates were sentenced to a 3-month term to be executed. Ngaba may have benefited from his status as a retired cop. They have been also fined to 430 US\$ and 350 US\$, and the 3 are required to jointly pay damages equivalent to 7,000 US\$ to the Water and Forestry Department.<sup>92</sup>



**November 2, 2018  
Libreville, Estuaire  
Province, Gabon**

Kanté Diango, a Malian national, was arrested in possession of 2 pairs of tusks, including those of an elephant calf – total weight 5.5 kg – and an elephant tail. He was caught red-handed in possession of ivory tips which he was in the process of selling. The ivory was hidden in a rice bag and he was about to carry out the transaction in a jewelry shop.<sup>93</sup>



**November 5, 2018  
Mouila, Ngounié  
Province, Gabon**

Abou Amadou, a Cameroonian national, with his 4 elephant calf tusks (7.3 kg) on his lap. Police, with the help of Conservation Justice, took him by surprise in a hotel room.<sup>94</sup>



**November 2018  
Mouila, Ngounié Province,  
Gabon**

- Convictions of Eyamane J. Perfect and Moukakou Didier and Gao Jingzhu, workers of the Talibois logging company, sentenced to 6 months in prison and 2 million CFA francs, or 3,500 US\$ each for felling hundreds of trees without a permit.

- Sentences of Beyeme Agilys, Mihindou Désiré and Ndogou Chérubén to 6 months' imprisonment, 4 of which were suspended, and 700,000 CFA francs, or 1,250 US\$ in fines and damages for ivory trafficking (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96).

- Conviction of Alassane Sow, a Senegalese subject living in Gabon caught in the act of holding 6 tusks (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96). He reportedly bought them 75,000 CFA francs per kilo (130 US\$/kg) from a poacher who was also arrested at Gamba.<sup>95</sup>



**November 28, 2018  
Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Pro-  
vince, Gabon**

Meixant Leboussi and Serge Ndjani were sentenced to 173 US\$ in fines and 8,670 US\$ in damages. See “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96.<sup>96</sup>



## November 2018

### Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Warrant of detention for Juste Ikoyizock, an employee at the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN) for having tried to sell an elephant trunk and 2 tusks. Juste, 33 years old, claims that he went into the forest to find bushmeat for the funeral he was organizing for his father, when he found himself faced with 3 elephants. He killed one of them and cut off the trunk immediately. He went back 2 days later to take the tusks.<sup>97</sup>

## December 2018

### Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Four tusks. Arrest made in a hotel. Cooperation between the police and Conservation Justice.<sup>98</sup>

## 15-17 January 2019

### Mandji, Ngounié Province, Gabon

"Despite the speed of the assault, 3 thugs, probably knowing the spot, were able to escape through a window overlooking a dark area. In the room, the criminals abandoned a large loot of 4 ivory tips. The total mass of the products is estimated at 33kg," said one agent who requested anonymity. The traffickers seemed to be at home in this hotel. In the rush, they abandoned the 4 tusks on the spot. Two days later, 2 of the fugitives, Arthur Mevime Nze and Arnaud Makalouba, were arrested.<sup>99</sup>



## 17 and 18 January 2019

### Booué, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Seizure of 2 tusks cut in 4, arrest in 2 stages of Waghe Mamadou and Djime Djouwara, of Malian nationality, then of Koungoué Nicaise, of Gabonese nationality. The last one is the ringleader of the operation.<sup>100</sup>

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## November 1-28, 2018

### Dzanga-Sangha National Park, Sangha-Mbaéré Prefecture, Central African Republic

Brutal revival of poaching activities 500 km from Bangui. At least 6 elephants within a month in the park, which covers 4000 km<sup>2</sup> and is listed as a UNESCO heritage site.<sup>101</sup>

## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

## October 31, 2018

### Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo

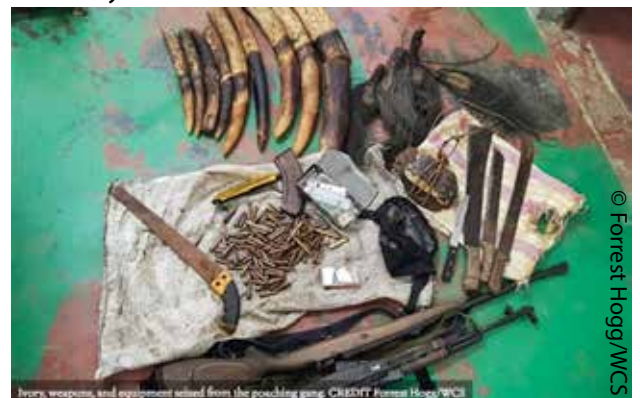
Two ivory dealers were arrested red-handed in possession of and transporting 2 ivory tips, cut into 4 pieces and weighing a total of approximately 20 kg.<sup>102</sup>

## REPEATED OFFENSE

## November 22, 2018

### Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo

Leonard Beckou, head of the gang, and his 3 confederates, one of whom is from the Democratic Republic of Congo, were sentenced to 5 years in prison. Park rangers encircled their base camp at full moon in the Nodoki Forest. Two large caliber guns were hung up on a tree, and 8 elephant calf tusks were seized. Beckou is a repeat offender. For his new poaching campaign, he had brought in 3 young men who were unemployed and attracted by adventure and most importantly by the tremendous profit that they hoped to make selling the ivory.<sup>103</sup>



## November 23, 2018

### Dolisie, Niari Department, Republic of the Congo

Georges Siombo and Mesmin N'dinga Bounda sentenced to 18 months in prison and 100,000 FCFA in fines (170 US\$) plus one million FCFA in damages (1,700 US\$). Siombo pays the poachers. Bounda is the salesman. See n°19 p. 103.<sup>104</sup>



## November 27, 2018 and January 2019

### Owando, Cuvette Department, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 2 pieces of raw ivory in the hands of a member of the Para Commando Group of the Congolese Armed Forces. The ivory came from the Likouala department, where the suspect was assigned on a border control mission at the Central African Republic border. For smuggling activities, he is apparently well-established in the cities of Impfondo, Ouessou and Owando. Mboumba, 39 years old, was sentenced, at the beginning of 2019, to 3 years in prison, 5 million FCFA in fines (8730 US\$) and the same amount in damages.<sup>105</sup>



January 12, 2019

**Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of Congo. Border with Cameroon.**

Seizure of 9 elephant tusks. Total weight of 10 kg. Three arrests, including one uniformed soldier of the FAC (Congoese Armed Forces), who is of the same family as the director of the prison where he will be detained.<sup>106</sup>

January 12, 2019

**Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of Congo. Border with Cameroon.**

Sentenced to 3 years in prison. The man was caught illegally possessing 2 tusks in November 2018.<sup>107</sup>



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**GANG**

December 20, 2018

**Kinshasa, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of 60 kg of ivory by agents of the ICCN (Congoese Institute for the Conservation of Nature), with help from Conserv Congo. A preliminary investigation was carried out conjointly by the Congo-Brazzaville and the Congo-Kinshasa.<sup>108</sup>

**AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

January 2019

**State of Georgia, United States of America**

Mike Jines, wildlife hunter, receives threats after posting a picture of himself behind a dead little elephant shot between the eyes. The dead mother is in the background. Jines claims to have fired in self-defense.<sup>109</sup>



**ASIA**

**CAMBODIA**

December 13, 2018

**Phnom Penh Autonomous Port, Cambodia**

Record seizure for the General Department of Customs and Excise today at the river port: 1026 tusks and sections hidden amid a shipment of marble in a container coming from Malaca in Mozambique. Depending on the sources, the total quantity varies from "over 3.2 t" to "nearly 3.5 t." In any case, it is the largest amount ever taken in the country. The Cambodian administration was informed by the United States Embassy, following a US Fish and Wildlife Service investigation. The container had arrived last July, but no one had come to pick it up. To get to Phnom Penh, the cargo came up the Mekong from Viet Nam. The ivory's final destination was undoubtedly China or Thailand.<sup>110</sup>

**CHINA**

**GANG**

Mid-November 2018

**Guangdong Province and Hong Kong, China**

Seizure of 10 tusks. Total weight: 323.7 kg. Seventeen arrests, including 6 in Hong Kong. A gang specialized in ivory trafficking between Hong Kong and continental China has been dismantled.<sup>111</sup>



November 26, 2018

**Beijing, Municipality of Beijing, China**



Conviction upheld on appeal: 9 years and 6 months in prison for fraudulently purchasing carved ivories worth a total of 900,000 yuan (130,000 US\$), via WeChat during 2017.<sup>112</sup>

Late November 2018

**Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure of 6 necklaces and a pair of earrings in a parcel posted from Japan.<sup>113</sup>



7-15 January 2019

**Canton Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Five seizures in 9 days in passenger's luggage from Addis Ababa. Overall seizure of 82 worked ivories (2,064 g), some hidden in candy boxes.<sup>114</sup>



The small carriers are making the big traffics.

January 17 and 25, 2019

**Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China**

- Seizure of 9 pendants and necklaces on a passenger coming from Amsterdam. Total weight: 219 g.

- Seizure of 3 bracelets on a passenger coming from Qatar. Total weight 58 g.<sup>115</sup>



January 27, 2019

**Xiamen International Airport, Fujian Province, China**

Two seizures on the same day:

- Worked ivories (292 g) on a passenger on a Macau Airlines flight.

- Worked ivories (271 g).

The 2 traffickers are Chinese workers on mission in Cambodia. They bought the items for 350 and 500 US\$ in temples. At their small level, they are participating in a massive import into China. This is the daily routine of small carriers.<sup>116</sup>

**INDIA**

October 10, 2018

**Dejuan, Bargarh District, State of Odisha, India**

Villagers discovered an elephant body and informed the authorities. The Department of Forests noted that the animal had been dead for a few days and that the tusks had been extracted. The carcass was taken in for an autopsy; an investigation has been launched to identify the culprits.<sup>117</sup>

October 17, 2018

**Chandragiri Forest Reserve, Narsinghpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

The inhabitants of Mahulmada discovered a heartbreaking scene last Wednesday. A tusker lying in the middle of a path, writhing in pain. When the forest rangers were notified, they came with veterinarians who initiated medical care. But the animal had lost a lot of blood. He died 3 days later. He was buried in the forest, after his tusks, measuring 75 and 80 cm, had been extracted and handed over to the Athgarh forestry office. It is unclear what caused his wounds. According to the villagers, he was shot by a poacher, but the forest rangers says that he died following a fight between 2 herds of elephants. Whatever the reason, the villagers accuse the forest rangers of no longer patrolling the forest reserve since the tigress Sundari, accused of killing 2 people, was reported. Apparently, they no longer come when elephants invade the farmers' fields.<sup>118</sup>



October 24, 2018

**Jaipur, State of Rajasthan, India**

The town police are very proud of their latest seizure: 6 kg of ivory. They received a tip according to which 3 individuals were about to sell some tusks in a park. They laid a trap and arrested Amit Sharma (23 years old), Vishnu Prasad Sharma (23 years old) and Kamlesh Sharma (35 years old), caught red-handed.<sup>119</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

October 25, 2018

**Mysuru, State of Karnataka, India**

Shanoj Kumar (39 years old) was nabbed again.

He was trying to sell a tusk in the Subash Nagar neighborhood, accompanied by another man. Agents from the mobile forest brigade were informed and went to the site where they snagged Kumar, although his accomplice managed to flee. The ivory tip and a scooter were seized. This is not Shanoj Kumar's first offence: he was already indicted of illegally transporting a leopard skin.<sup>120</sup>



**November 2018**

**Nilackal, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala State, India**

In November, molasses waste scattered in the open air in the forest near Nilackal, Pathanamthitta District, attracted elephants. This waste comes from a warehouse damaged by the August 2018 floods and owned by Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB), an autonomous entity responsible for the administration of 1248 temples in the State. Under the effect of rain and over time, molasses began to ferment. Elephants come to drink there and are quickly becoming intoxicated. The landfill is located near a pilgrim camp on the way to the Sabarimala hill shrine. The obstinate presence of elephants, who refuse to leave despite firecrackers and other deterrents put in place by forest agents, is causing pilgrims concern.<sup>121</sup>

**November 4, 2018**

**Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India**

Seizure of 2 tusks, weighing a total of 15 kg. Three arrests near Lake Hebbal. The 3 ruff-raff claim to have found the tusks on an elephant that died in the Sakleshpur forest.<sup>122</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Haridwar District, State of Uttarakhand, India**

Contrary to the initial statement according to which the male elephant, aged approximately 20 years, died of an illness, the autopsy revealed that he was killed by a bullet in the heart during the Diwali Night. And yet, loud and clear, the forest service had claimed they would be 100% mobilized for the occasion, to stop any intrusions in the forest. A ranger, speaking anonymously, said that the poachers undoubtedly planned to come back the following night to saw off the tusks.<sup>123</sup>

**November 14, 2018**

**Near Athmallik, State of Odisha, India**

**November 9, 14 and 23, 2018  
Angul District Odisha State, India**

- Night poaching of a 35-year-old male. Amputated tusks.

- A 35-year-old super tusker was electrocuted by a cable lying on the ground, supposedly set out to trap boars. The forest rangers were informed by an anonymous call. When they arrived on the scene, the tusks were still in place. Five arrests.

- Death of an 8-year-old male elephant. First attributed to a disease by the forestry services. The tusks are in place.

In the district, NGOs and other wildlife advocates are calling for the eradication of electric fences that kill hundreds of deer, wild boars, tigers and elephants.<sup>124</sup>



**November 15 and 16, 2018  
Hemamura, State of Odisha, India**

Three overcharged poachers were arrested. Poachers are deliberately taking up electrocution. Often claimed to be a defensive weapon used to keep animals out of cultivated fields, electrocution is revealing itself more and more for what it is: an offensive weapon in the hands of poachers. An 11-kV line strung across a rice field will do the job. The elephant receives a fatal electric shock.<sup>125</sup>



**November 16, 2018**

**Demow, Sivasagar District, State of Assam, India**

Death for no apparent reason. The body was taken to the veterinary hospital for an autopsy.<sup>126</sup>



**November 23, 2018**

**Near Kermalam, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Another case of elephant electrocution. His trunk touched an electric fence around a corn field, hooked up from dusk to dawn to a clandestine connection to the public grid. The farmer, K Rangaraj, 42 years old, is being prosecuted. The elephant carcass was buried on-site.<sup>127</sup>



**December 11, 2018**

**Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

A dead elephant was found (approximately 23 years old).

Eight elephants have died in 6 months in the district. Five were males. Their tusks were sawed off by unidentified individuals. The NGOs accuse the Tamil Nadu forestry service of negligence. The neighboring Kerala service is credited with arresting 2 suspects and seizing 2 tusks (see next event). Poachers are not the only killers in the Theni forests. NGOs also point their fingers at the high voltage lines going across the supposed sanctuary of Magalamai.<sup>128</sup>

**December 11, 2018**  
**Kumily, Idukki District, State of Kerala, and Cumbum, Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



R. Ganga (37 years old) and A. Prabhhu (34 years old) were transporting 2 tusks weighing a total of 9.215 kg, cut up into 4 pieces. They were intercepted by forest rangers on the outskirts of the city of Kumily. They said they had extracted the tusks from the cadaver of an elephant that they had found in the Venniyar Forest Reserve in the neighboring State of Tamil Nadu. While they were held in custody, the forest rangers went to look for the remains. They found them the next day, east of Cumbum, next to an electric line, a few hundred meters from a station belonging to Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco). The 15- to 17-year-old elephant was electrocuted one week ago. This is the sixth elephant to die in 3 months in the forest reserve because of Tangedco's electric lines that hang too low.<sup>129</sup>



**December 14, 2018**  
**Moolanpalayam, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The village inhabitants notified the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve administration that they had found a dead elephant. When the forest rangers arrived, the tusks had disappeared. The autopsy revealed that the 20-year-old male elephant had died of complications from gastric problems due to an ulcer. He could no longer eat. A sniffer dog was brought in to track the tusk thieves, and the villagers were interrogated. Mookanpalayam is located at the border between the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.<sup>130</sup>

**December 14, 2018**  
**Siliguri, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India**

Seizure of 2 tusks cut into 5 sections. One arrest.<sup>131</sup>



**December 16, 2018**  
**Maloni, Bharatpur District, State of Rajasthan, India**



A second arrest following the death of a 35-year-old elephant last August. Given the injuries to the animal's neck and abdomen, the Forestry Department initially suspected a case of poaching, but the autopsy showed that death was caused by electrocution. Balkaar Singh has been accused of installing an electric line around the field that he cultivates with Sarjeet Singh, who was arrested 2 weeks ago.<sup>132</sup>

**December 18, 2018**  
**Ennore, Chennai Municipality, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The arrest of 2 crooks involved in several cases of breaking and entering, as well as extortion, led investigators to an ivory trafficker. When they examined the cell phones of Vasanth (28 years old) and Rajkumar (25 years old), who were stopped by a patrol the previous night, the police found photos of 2 tusks. In the course of their investigation, the inspectors searched Chinraj's home and seized the tusks that he had installed in his Pooja – a room dedicated to meditation and prayer – as he waited to make his fortune. He was hoping to sell them at a good price. For the moment, the lead ends there. Chinraj has not given his supplier's name.<sup>133</sup>

**December 21, 2018**  
**Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The search is ongoing for an elephant with only one tusk and suffering from a wound to the leg, undoubtedly caused by a poacher's bullet. The elephant is limping aimlessly somewhere in the Madhukkarai forest.<sup>134</sup>

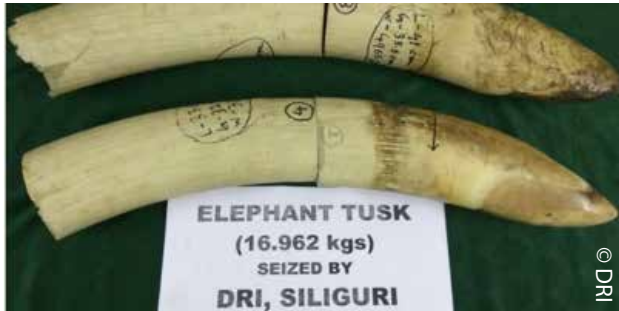
**December 22, 2018**  
**Srivilliputhur, Virudhunagar District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Two tusks were discovered in a hardware store. Ashok was arrested, along with 4 accomplices: a snack vendor, an autorickshaw driver, a retired BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) employee and an electrician.<sup>135</sup>



**January 2, 2019  
Ghoshpukur, Hooghly District, West Bengal State, India**

Seizure inside a container on the trailer of a truck of 2 severed tusks weighing 17 kg. The raw ivory was hidden under a shipment of black tea. Arrest of the driver Mr. Subodh Das, 43 years old. According to his own statements, he had picked up the tusks in Kamrup district. He was heading for Calcutta and the cargo was then to reach a country on the Indochinese peninsula or China via Bangladesh.<sup>136</sup>



**January 4, 2019  
Dudurkote, Dhenkanal district, State of Odisha, India**

Arrest of a poacher. His weapon is electricity. His defense is to say that the elephant is an unintentional catch. His targets are the boars.<sup>137</sup>



**January 6, 2019  
Tangla Railway Station, Udalguri District, Assam State, India**

The ambush by customs and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) over confidential information was well set up. When the 2 motorcycles arrived at 2p.m. near Tangla station on the Tamulpur road, they were intercepted but the traffickers vanished into thin air leaving 2 bags full of rice on the spot. In the rice, there were 3 pairs of tusks, one of which was from a very young calf. Total weight of 13 kg.<sup>138</sup>

**January 9, 2019  
Krishnagiri, Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Discovery by a patrol of forestry officers of a gutted male elephant carcass, aged about 13 years. He is believed to have died after a battle with another male. The agents went to get backup. When they returned to the scene, one of the tusks had been cut and stolen.<sup>139</sup>

**January 23, 2019  
Garu, Latehar District, Jharkhand State, India**  
Seizure of a pair of tusks and 200,000 rupees (2,800 US\$) in cash. Eight days earlier, very close to the village, an elephant's body had been found near a railway crossing. The tusks were missing.<sup>140</sup>

**January 29, 2019  
Coimbatore, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

A farmer was sentenced to 2 years in prison for electrocution of an elephant in 2009. The victim had died of cardiac arrest. His trunk was burned. A WLOR (Wildlife Offence Report) had been drafted. It has been proven that Mr. Gowder fed the fence by diverting a line from Tamil Tangedco (Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited) grid. In the same district, 2 farmers have already been sentenced to 6 years in prison and 3 years for the same offences. On appeal, this last sentence was reduced to 2 years. Forest officials point out that most farmers have fences powered by solar panels. In this configuration, no animals are killed.<sup>141</sup>



**INDONESIA**

**Mid-November 2018  
Blang Awe, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A body in decay has been found. The tusks were cut off. Traces of blood were taken from the scene of the crime. Analysis is underway to determine the causes of death. The hypothesis of poisoning has not been excluded.<sup>142</sup>

**Late 2018  
Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Year-end results for 2018: 11 Sumatran elephants, compared to 13 in 2017. The population in the province is estimated at fewer than 500. "Of the 11 deaths, 3 were caused by elephant conflicts with humans, 3 by poaching activities and 5 by natural causes," says Sapto Aji Prabowo, director of the province BKSDA.<sup>143</sup>

## ISRAEL

**October 18, 2018**  
**Allenby Bridge or King Hussein Bridge, West Bank Territory, occupied by Israel. Border with Jordan.**

Seizure of 2 tusks in the belongings of a Palestinian national. He said he was coming back from Africa. The tusks seem to be disguised as buffalo horns. See "On the Trail" n°8 p.85.<sup>144</sup>



## MYANMAR

**GANG**  
**October 16, 2018**  
**Taikkyi, Yangon Region, Myanmar**

Conviction of a gang of poachers who killed 2 elephants, one of which was killed on November 7, 2016 near the village of Chaung Sauk. Ye Lin Aung (27 years old), Gyt Tu (25 years old), Thura (24 years old), Nay Lin (24 years old), Bo Bo, (24 years old), Zaw Lin (43 years old), Tin Htway (36 years old) and Pho Lone (60 years old) each got 3 years in prison. As for U Than Lin (50 years old), former village administrator, he was sentenced to 4 and a half years in prison. Eight other members of the gang are still being tracked down.<sup>145</sup>



**October 17, 2018**  
**Pathein District, Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar**

The Emergency Elephant Rescue Unit (EERU) intervened recently in the district to drive a group of approximately 20 elephants away from villages. The specialists suspected that the herd could attract poachers. Today, they were patrolling, in a joint operation with the police and agents from the Forest Department. Around noon, 2 suspects were spotted on Chaungtha-Ngwe Hsaung Road. When they saw the patrol, one of the 2 men fled, but Saw Htoo Nyaw (32 years old) was caught. He was carrying 2 knives and 3 bottles of poison. During his interrogation, he gave the names of Naing Htet Kyaw (18 years old) and U Kyaw Ta Thein (56 years old). Those 2 were arrested in the Thalek Kwar Forest Reserve, with a rifle, bullets, poison and other poaching equipment. The investigation revealed that Naing Htet Kyaw and the one who got away – Maung Aye – were the poachers, while the other 2 were villagers hired as guides. The poachers can get between 6 and 10 million kyats (3,795 to 6,325 US\$) for killing an elephant. Their stooges are paid 500,000 kyats (315 US\$), at best.<sup>146</sup>



## SRI LANKA

**October 1, 2018**  
**Hambantota, Southern Province, Sri Lanka**

An elephant that was wounded by a bullet in his back-left leg received treatment.<sup>147</sup>

**October 1, 2018**  
**Habarana, North Central Province, Sri Lanka**

**The plague of electric fences**

Another female elephant succumbs to a power line protecting a farming plot on the outskirts of the Hurulu eco-park, a UNESCO biosphere reserve since 1977. The electric fence with a voltage powerful enough to kill an elephant here or a tiger there, is a monstrosity, a kind of punitive technological attack, most often coming from an unauthorized connection on a public line distributing medium voltage. These are not deterrent discharges that make someone turn around after contact, they are deadly discharges that unfailingly trigger burns and cardiac arrest. In India, this practice is also reported to be the cause of human mortality, which is not taken into account in official statistics.

According to the study by veterinary surgeon and Professor Luke Arnot of the University of Pretoria, more than 20,000 reptiles are killed each year in South Africa by electric fences defending agricultural plots. "With tortoises, we tend to think of poaching and bush fires, but electric fences are as big, if not a bigger problem."

Although Dr. Arnot has published in professional magazines good practices such as laying power cables above the ground and using electricity only at night, fences, even low voltage fences, designed to harass lions and reflexively force them to turn back are deadly for turtles that instantly take refuge under their shells and stay in contact, and for pangolins that put themselves in their defensive position and end up, like turtles, dying from heart failure.<sup>148</sup>



**November 30, 2018**  
**Udawalawe National Park, Sabaragamuwa Province, Sri Lanka**

Death of an adult elephant in Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home. Both tusks were intact. Unsuccessful attempt to poach and steal ivory? The center was established in 1995 by the Department of Wildlife Conservation. Its goal is to welcome and care for orphaned elephants before their release. The center is open to the public at bottle time.<sup>149</sup>

**Early December 2018  
Udawalawe National Park, Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces, Sri Lanka**

An 11-year-old male was shot 160 km from Colombo. In 2018, the “national treasure” lost 277 jewels. They died by electrocution, hit by trains, in metal and explosives traps, and by farmers’ dissuasive bullets. Non-regulated waste dumps attract elephants who are being driven from their fragmented forest habitats and losing their sources of drinking water. They eat plastic and spoiled food, and are intoxicated. The government does not seem to be aware of the urgency involved in curbing the catastrophe. “We are trying to increase awareness among people through schools in areas near the different national parks,” says the spokesperson of the State services for the protection of wildlife.<sup>150</sup>



**Early December 2018  
Kandy, Central Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of 11 presumed Gaja Muthu, the pearls that sometimes form at the base of elephants’ tusks (see “On the Trail” n°15 p. 101, n°19 p. 112, n°22 p. 100). Estimated value: 40 million rupees, 221,500 US\$, or 20,136 US\$ each. Seven arrests.<sup>151</sup>



**THAILAND**

**November 14, 2018  
Buntharik-Yod Mon Wildlife Sanctuary, Ubon Ratchathani Province, Thailand. Border with Laos.**

An AK-47 bullet fired at close range. Entry through the mouth, exit through the left hind leg. He was 20 to 25 years old and weighed 3 to 4 tons. He was buried on site after being sprinkled with quicklime. The dirty trick was allegedly perpetrated by illegal fauna and rosewood poachers from Laos, or by a soldier dressed in “the uniform of a neighbouring country” caught by trap camera with an AK-47 and GPS in hand near the scene of the massacre.<sup>152</sup>

**December 16, 2018  
Border Crossing Point, Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge, Nakhon Phanom Province, Thailand**

Than Nguen Kee Thanh (43 years old), a Vietnamese national, arrived by bus from Thakhek, Laos, the capital of the border province of Khammouane. She was carrying 930 pieces of ivory jewelry and sections of tusks, probably of African origin. The load weighed 22 kg and was worth an estimated

one million bahts (30,300 US\$). Originally from the province of Ha Tinh in Viet Nam, she claimed to simply be the courier, paid 2,000 bahts (60 US\$) for the trip. She was supposed to hand the load over to a contact at the bus terminal in the city of Nakhon Phanom. The customs agents suspect that she is a member of a gang. Traffickers now prefer road transportation to air transport.<sup>153</sup>

**January 21, 2019  
Nakhon Pathom, Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand**

Premchai Karnasuta, the public works magnate, was arrested in February 2018 for poaching in a national park with guides and a cook. Two tusks were subsequently seized at his home (see “On the Trail” n°20 p.126-127). Premchai and his wife Khanitta claim that they come from a Thai elephant. A year later, the Criminal Court orders a DNA analysis to determine its true origin.<sup>154</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**January 13, 2019  
Vinh Phuc Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of nearly 10kg of worked ivories following an arrest in the act of illegal sale. A search of the suspect’s home resulted in the seizure of many objects, including combs, bracelets and statuettes.<sup>155</sup>



**EUROPE**

**GERMANY**

**November 16, 2018  
Frankfurt am Main International Airport, Land Hessen, Germany**

Seizure in the luggage of a passenger bound for Viet Nam of 4 carved tusks.<sup>156</sup>



**BELGIUM**

**Late December 2018  
Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium**

Since the beginning of the year, inspections have been carried out in 34 antique shops and 3 auction houses in Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent. Result:

- 152 ivory pieces seized or voluntarily handed over to the authorities.
- 23 reports of violations.
- 12 official warnings.

Reason: no information available on the origin and manufacturing dates of the items.<sup>157</sup>

## FRANCE

**November 27, 2018**

**Grasse, Alpes-Maritimes  
Department, France**

Conviction of 2 second-hand goods dealers and a restorer specialized in ivory objects. All 3 received one year prison sentences and fines of 30,000 €. An accomplice received one year in prison and a fine of 10,000 €. They were charged with attempting to sell 2 tusks through an auction house in Cannes. The tusks weighed a total of 110 kg and were estimated at between 150,000 € and 300,000 €. They were accompanied by phony certificates of historic origin from the Belgian Congo. Search warrants led to the seizure of carved ivories and 3 other tusks (see "On the Trail" n°4 p.89). The instigator of the sham is 78 years old. He is a member of a community of travelers.<sup>158</sup>



## ITALY

**November 2018**

**Catania, Sicily Region, Italy**

Seizure in an antique shop of 14 ivory figurines measuring between 13 and 30 cm representing unicorns, animals and deities, all of unknown origin and manufacturing dates.<sup>159</sup>

## UNITED KINGDOM

**Late October 2018**

**Chatteris, Cambridgeshire County, England,  
United Kingdom**

Three tusks weighing 17 kg each were discovered in an attic as part of an inheritance. Estimated commercial value: 150,000 £, or 9900 €/kg. The inheritor took them to a local museum in the back of her Mini Austin. The museum curator contacted IFAW for destruction of the tusks, as the best way of ensuring that they do not end up on the black market.<sup>160</sup>

**24 January 2019**

**World**

Satisfaction at eBay and IFAW after 10 years of collaboration to reduce raw and worked ivories sales ads on platforms. However, IFAW notes a resurgence of ivory on the German platform.<sup>162</sup>



**Mid-December 2018**

**United Kingdom**

In the midst of the Brexit storm, the United Kingdom Parliament took a break and passed a law on Tuesday December 18<sup>th</sup> in tribute to elephants, removing any commercial value from most colonial ivories from the Indian sub-continent or East Africa. Heirs and other acquirers of ivory now hold a single sentimental or cultural value or waste that they dispose of through IFAW. The ban on the sale of ivory on the domestic market in the United Kingdom and for export is announced as more restrictive than in the United States. Within the Antique Dealers' Corporation, there are rumblings that there is no connection between the sale of Japanese netsukes and the poaching of the "magnificent wild animals" that are elephants. They fail to point out to the specialized press or the general public that antiquities dating back to more than a century formally authenticated by documentary and scientific evidence may continue to be marketed and that objects manufactured before 1947 containing less than 10% ivory may also be placed on the market. The famous Victorian era teapots with their ivory lid knobs, as vital to English civilization as street demonstrations for French civilization, will not be forced into a shameful attic trade. Musical instruments prior to 1975 will also be exempted. The Queen approved the law on December 20 and it is expected to come into force no later than mid-2019.<sup>161</sup>

## Elephants and Mammoths

### RUSSIA

**Mid-November 2018**

**Bryansk, Bryansk Oblast, Russia**

255 illegal objects were discovered in the baggage of a Russian passenger leaving Moscow for the Ukraine. They included mammoth tusk sections, ivory figurines and sharks' teeth. The total value is estimated at 4,500 US\$.<sup>1</sup>

### UNITED KINGDOM

**January 4, 2019**

**Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom**

Genetic analyses carried out by scientists on behalf of Edinburgh Zoo (Scotland) have shown that worked ivories advertised as elephant ivory sold in Cambodia were actually made of mammoth ivory. Scottish scientists are working with their colleagues in Phnom Penh to ensure that the genetic research on the origin of ivory is consolidated.<sup>2</sup>

Israel and Kenya propose the listing of the woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) under CITES Appendix II. The European Union mocks this proposal. However, consumers do not have the necessary training to examine Schreger's lines on statuettes or bracelets to ensure that the mammoth ivory appellation does not hide illegal elephant ivory. The sellers of real mammoth ivory are not mistaken; they are already asking for CITES certificates to display them in the store window, as Robin des Bois observed in Hong Kong on March 10, 2019.

中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府  
The Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China

**CITES** CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA AP 5 (32)  
濒危野生動物種國際貿易公約

**RE-EXPORT CERTIFICATE**  
再出口證明書

1. Certificate No. 證明書編號  
APCIRC 82307

2. Valid until (Expire Month/Year)  
有效期至 (月/年)

3. Exporter 出口人

4. Consigner 收貨人

5. Conditions / Other remarks 條件/其他說明

6. Management Authority 管理當局  
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
SF, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices  
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon  
HONG KONG  
香港特別行政區  
漁農自然護理署  
地址：九龍新沙灣道303號  
在沙灣政府合署五樓

No. 序號	Species (Scientific) & Common Name 物種 (學名) 及俗稱	Appendix & Source 附錄及來源	Country/region of Origin 來源地	Description 描述	Quantity & Unit 數量及單位
1	MAMMUTHUS PRIMIGENIUS	NON-CITES	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	TUSK CARVING	**30.34 KG □ PCI**
***** LAST ITEM(S) *****					

7. This re-export certificate is issued by 管理當局

08 March 2019  
Date 日期

HENRY P.L. HO  
Name 姓名

Official Stamp (Red)  
正式 (紅色)

Official Stamp (Blue)

R 020408

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## Other Mammals

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

January 26, 2019

**Pongola Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

**Karingani Game Reserve, Gaza Province, Mozambique**

The first phase of the transfer of 13 painted dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) from South Africa to Mozambique was successfully completed. The Karingani reserve covers 150,000 ha. For 3 weeks, the 13 dogs will stay in an enclosure until they adapt to their new environment.<sup>1</sup>



#### KENYA

Early October 2018

**Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**

Discovery of a camp of poachers. They were arrested in the act of bushmeat smoking by a mixed patrol of Mara Conservancy rangers and TANAPA (Tanzania National Parks). In the mass grave, several skeletons and viscera of wildebeest and zebras (*Equus grevyi* or *Equus quagga*) have been identified. Four arrests.<sup>2</sup>

December 11, 2018

**Nairobi, Kenya**

The Central Bank of Kenya has issued new coins representing a giraffe, a rhinoceros, a lion and an elephant. According to a constitutional law passed in 2010, coins and bills should pay tribute to symbols of Kenya, rather than display portraits of individuals, even presidents of the Republic.

Not everyone agrees about the new coins. The country's consumer federation has taken legal action and filed for a suspension of the new money, made in the United Kingdom. The federation feels that the public was not sufficiently consulted on the choice of the effigies.<sup>3</sup>



Central Bank of Kenya

#### MOZAMBIQUE

**GANG**

Early December 2018

**Zambezi Delta, Zambezia Province, Mozambique**

Prolific poaching tally, dozens of blue cephalophagus (*Philantomba monticola*, Appendix II), sunis from Zanzibar (*Neotragus moschatus*), genets (genus *Genetta*) in 3 nights. The gang had set up camp on the edge of a reserve and entered at night with headlights and hunting dogs.<sup>4</sup>



#### NIGERIA

Early December 2018

**Borno State, Nigeria**

Poaching of a striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Three arrests.<sup>5</sup>



#### ZAMBIA

October 2018

**Mpika, Northern Province, Zambia**

Sentencing of Bright Chanda and Kelvin Kunda to 5 years' imprisonment with hard labour for illegally holding the meat of a lechwe (*Kobus lechwe*, Appendix II).<sup>6</sup>



Mid-January 2019

**Solwezi, North West Province, Zambia**

Sentence of Charity Kaswende (43 years old) to a 7,600 US\$ fine or 3 years in prison if failure to pay for illegal detention of 53kg of hartebeest meat (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*).<sup>7</sup>



**Mid-January 2019  
Solwezi, North West Province,  
Zambia**

Sentence of Paul Jishebele (62 years old) to a fine of 3,800 US\$ or 3 years in prison if failure to pay for illegal detention of 66kg of impala meat (*Aepyceros melampus*).<sup>8</sup>



**ZIMBABWE**

**FAMILY AFFAIRS  
Late October 2018**

**Chipinge, Manicaland Province,  
Zimbabwe**

The district director of economic development, Robert Chawatama, was arrested along with 2 accomplices. They are suspected of poaching a buffalo. At the time of arrest, they were in possession of 2 firearms.<sup>9</sup>



**AMERICA**

**BOLIVIA**

**End of January 2019  
Department of Santa Cruz, Bolivia**

Seizure of armadillo meat (family Dasypodidae) in straw huts on the banks of the Pirai River.<sup>10</sup>

**BRAZIL**

**October 11, 2018**

**Gurupi, Tocantins State, Brazil**

Seizure of 2 armadillos (family Dasypodidae). Arrest of 2 men who were trying to sell them for 26 US\$ individually. Fine of 134 US\$ each. The armadillos were released.<sup>11</sup>



**December 20, 2018**

**Caxias, State of Maranhão, Brazil**

A dead armadillo (family Dasypodidae) was seized in the car. The driver claims to be a traveling salesman. He says that he bought it for 60 real, or 15 US\$ on the side of Route BR 316.<sup>12</sup>

**January 8, 2019**

**Ariquemes, Rondônia State, Brazil**

Arrest of several people for illegal possession of firearms and environmental crime. Two skinned pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 3 rifles were found in their car during a routine check-up.<sup>13</sup>



**End of January 2019  
Cunha, São Paulo State, Brazil**

Seizure of 7 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) during a routine inspection. The animals were immediately released and their owner was fined 943 US\$.<sup>14</sup>



**CANADA**

**GANG  
OPERATION CERFTITUDE  
December 12, 2018**

**Saint-Gabriel-de-Brandon, Mandeville and  
Saint-Cuthbert, Quebec Province, Canada**

Thanks to information from the public, a network of poachers was dismantled, along with the clandestine butcher shops and sales points where they sold white-tailed deer meat (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis* Appendix III in Guatemala). According to the director of land wildlife at the Quebec province Ministry of Wildlife, the global white-tailed deer population is viable. It is subject to hunting regulations, but poaching could cause difficulties for local populations, particularly if it affects females. Already in 2016, Operation Crépuscule led to the seizure of hundreds of kilos of deer and moose (*Alces alces*) meat.<sup>15</sup>

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**December 2018**

**Lawrence County, Missouri  
State, United States of America**

Sentencing of David Berry Jr., 29, to one year in prison for poaching with family members hundreds of deer whose heads were mounted as trophies and were probably traded. The decapitated bodies were left in the forest. In



addition, D. Berry will have to watch once a month in prison the film Bambi produced in 1942 by Disney. The first session of this educational hard labor took place on Christmas Eve.<sup>16</sup>



## MEXICO

**October 17, 2018**

### **Atitalaquia, State of Hidalgo, Mexico**

Rescue by PROFEPA of 2 coyotes (*Canis latrans*) in captivity in an industrial waste transit station.<sup>17</sup>

**November 26, 2018**

### **San Bernardo Mixtepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico**

Rescue of a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) hunted by poachers and their dogs and cornered in a village. After veterinary examination and a rest period, he was released into a local forest by PROFEPA agents.<sup>18</sup>



**Early January 2019**

### **Aporo, State of Michoacán, Mexico**

facebook

City councilor David Bautista Reséndiz has provoked a wave of protests on social networks. In the photo posted on Facebook by the Amor Peludo association, he poses with 2 presumed coyotes (*Canis latrans*) in his hands. The photo triggered a civil and criminal complaint from the Federal Prosecutor for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA).<sup>19</sup>

## PERU

**Late December 2018**

### **Arequipa, Department of Arequipa, Peru**

Seizure of 4 Bolivian hairy armadillos (*ChaetophRACTUS nationi*, Appendix II), 3 dead and one live, at the El Altiplano feria. During the holiday season, armadillos are more and more highly sought after for collective purification rituals. They are piled up in cardboard boxes and in pails at the markets.

Mid-December, the ministry of Agriculture issued a warning to the public against the abuse and threatened fines as high as 20,000 sols, or 6000 US\$ for purchasers of poached armadillos.<sup>20</sup>

## ASIA

## BANGLADESH

**January 22, 2019**

### **Jotbazar, Naogaon District, Bangladesh**

This male specimen of nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) had a lucky escape. According to divergent reports, it entered through a rift on the border between India and Bangladesh or was captured in West Bengal by cattle traffickers and loaded into a truck to be slaughtered, butchered and sold as quarters on arrival. He allegedly jumped off the cattle truck near Jotbazar. In any case, it was there that he was immediately surrounded by the inhabitants who were both curious and ready to kill him to feed. A witness informed the police that a "large deer" had broken into the village. He was narrowly saved. To free him, the villagers demanded a ransom equal to 600,000 US\$. After hours of negotiation, he was handed over to the police. "We told them that the Prime Minister might reward them for releasing it," said Mozaffar Hossain, the district chief's police commissioner. The survivor was taken to Ramsagar National Park, which already has a female Nilgai. From this couple, breeding is envisioned. The population of nilgai antelope is reported to have disappeared from Bangladesh. It is the largest antelope on the Indian subcontinent.<sup>21</sup>



## CAMBODIA

**January 15, 2019**

### **Chhay Areng, Kaoh Kong Province, Cambodia**

Freeing by rangers of a trapped Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India) and removal of 126 traps.



In just a few years, 200 civets have been removed from the hands of traffickers. They were intended for Kopi Luwak farms. 30 to 100 US\$ per cup of coffee (see "On the Trail" n° 1 p. 41).<sup>22</sup>

**January 20, 2019**

**Cardamom National Park, Cambodia**

Rescue of a lesser mousedeer (*Tragulus kanchil*). The suspect dumped a bag before vanishing on a moped. The rangers found a healthy specimen of the world's smallest deer inside. He was immediately released.<sup>23</sup>



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**CHINA**

**Early October, 2018**

**Jinzhou, Liaoning Province, China**

Seizure by postal customs of the antlers and skull of a Sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*) in a package from Japan. Sambar deer live in India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, the South of China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Borneo, Sumatra and Java.<sup>24</sup>



© Chinese Customs

**INDIA**

**October 8, 2018**

**Shiroda, State of Goa, India**

Unlucky break for Ulhas Velip (38 years old), Chandrakant Velip (38 years old) and Gurudas Gaonkar (51 years old). They were coming back in the wee hours from a poaching expedition in the Chikengal forest, when forest rangers caught them. Their night's catch consisted of 2 civets (family Viverridae) weighing a total of 7 kg. They were in possession of a handcrafted rifle and a supply of bullets.<sup>25</sup>

**October 17, 2018**

**Delhi Airport, National Capital Territory of Delhi, India**

Two Chinese nationals, 39 and 41 years old, were arrested before they embarked on a flight to Shanghai. They were carrying 15 Shahtoosh shawls, made of the luxurious wool of Tibetan antelopes (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I). The shawls were estimated at a total value of 4,500,000 rupees (62,000 US\$).<sup>26</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Narasipuram, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Four men for one Indian flying fox (*Pteropus giganteus*, Appendix II). P. Sasikumar (44 years old), P. Jeyaprakash (41 years old), B. Ashok (40 years old) and S. Sureshkumar (33 years old) were coming from the Pooluvampatti forest on 2 motorcycles with their catch when agents from the Forest Department stopped them, after receiving a tip. The seizure included a rifle, 6 bullets, the bat and some cooked meat.<sup>27</sup>



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**Early November 2018**

**Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh State, India**

Sentence of a poacher to 4 years in prison and a fine of 5,000 rupees (68 US\$) for possession in December 1997 of barasingha (*Rucervus duvaucelii*, Appendix I) and chital (*Axis axis*) antlers inside the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.<sup>28</sup>



**November 23, 2018**

**North Paravur, State of Kerala, India**

Georly George, 42 years old, was trying to sell 2 sambar deer antlers (*Rusa unicolor*) for the astronomical price of 50 million rupees (715,000 US\$). "Some traffickers do not hesitate to sell at exorbitant prices to launch a market and make the naive and superstitious believe in a golden deal." Double-headed boas would also be part of the fraud. Georly George didn't win a penny in the case. The interested buyers were cops. He then claimed that deer antlers were a family heirloom. Photos of other animals, especially sand boas, were found on his mobile phone. His profile is that of a rather experienced and cunning trafficker. One of his fellows was arrested.<sup>29</sup>



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**December 10, 2018**

**States of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, India**

Another raid in a workshop that makes paint brushes from mongoose hair (family Herpestidae, see "On the Trail" n°3 p.78, n°6 p.101, n°7 p.100, n°8 p.92, n°9 p.91, n°11 p.34, n°14 p.101 and n°22 p.105). This time, a joint operation between the NGO Wildlife Trust of India and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) made it possible to cast the net simultaneously in 4 States and raid 13 workshops. In Diamond Harbour Town, for example, south of Calcutta, 500 mongoose hair brushes were seized, and in Gopal Chandra Mridhya, a shop owner was arrested. All in all, over 3500 brushes were confiscated in the operation. The export hubs are Uttar Pradesh and Calcutta, the capital of West Bengal. To get around the law, traffickers camouflage the mongoose hair brushes by labelling them "Indian sable" (*Martes zibellina*), "kolinsky" (or Siberian weasel, *Mustela sibirica*, Appendix III), "badger" (*Meles meles*), "pony" or "kevrin" – a commercial term that covers several species of rodents.<sup>30</sup>

**December 27, 2018**

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

Seizure of bicycles, meat and 3 hog deer skins (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix III in Pakistan).<sup>31</sup>

**FAKE**

**January 3, 2019**

**Chikmagalur District, Karnataka State, India**

Arrest of a priest for attempting to market a skin presented as tiger skin. It was actually a calf skin coloured with hair dyes. According to him, the amount of the expected sale was for the for the maintenance of the place of religion. He was also in possession of a real chital skin (*Axis axis*).<sup>32</sup>



**January 5, 2019**

**Daying Ering Wildlife Sanctuary, Eastern Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh State, India**

Arrests of Dibash Pait (30 years old), Diganta Doley (25 years old), Batsa Doley (28 years old), Rajesh Sungkurang (42 years old) and Nong Doley with a carcass of Thai hog deer (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix I). Seizure of several firearms and ammunition. Stretching over 190 km<sup>2</sup>, the park is bordered by the Siang River on 3 sides. The grassy part is home to buffalo, deer or elephants, but also to migratory birds during the winter. The dense forest part is home to leopards, jackals and wild boars.<sup>33</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**January 8, 2019**

**District of Jaisalmer, State of Rajasthan, India**

The poacher's handmade rifle exploded. He was hit by the shrapnel. Somewhat seriously injured and questioned by the police, he explained that his intention was to scare off a Nilgai antelope that was approaching him. The police are incredulous, especially since the man has already been cited in several poaching cases.<sup>33 bis</sup>

**January 11, 2019**

**Shi Yomi District, Arunachal Pradesh State, India**

Two arrests for the sale of large Indian civet meat (*Viverra zibetha*, Appendix III).<sup>34</sup>

**IRAN**

**November 20, 2018**

**Badrud, Ispahan Province, Iran**

Poaching of 2 urials (*Ovis aries*, Appendix I or II). Two arrests.<sup>35</sup>

**December 4, 2018**

**Jogathai, Khorasan Razavi Province, Iran**

Poaching and cutting up of 3 urials (*Ovis aries*, Appendix I or II). One arrest.<sup>36</sup>

**December 28, 2018**

**Semnan Province, Iran**

National NGOs had expressed their concerns. According to them, the government's decision to grant urial hunting permits (*Ovis aries*, Appendix I or II) outside protected areas would facilitate poaching. There are too few hunting guards and other law enforcement officers to supervise the activity of rifle bearers and sort out the "good" rifles of authorized hunters and the "bad" rifles of poachers. The NGOs are probably right.<sup>37</sup>



**December 2018**

**Korai-ye Sofla, Khouzistan Province, Iran**

Poaching of an urial (*Ovis aries*, Appendix I or II). Two arrests. They are liable to an immediate administrative fine of 100 million rials (2,380 US\$). Seizure of a rifle, large numbers of cartridges and knives. A trial will follow. They will be liable to imprisonment for 3 months to 3 years, and a criminal fine of 30 to 50 million rials (715 to 1,200 US\$).<sup>38</sup>



## KAZAKHSTAN

**End of December 2018**

**Noura district, Karaganda Region, Kazakhstan**

Seizure of 18 saiga antelope carcasses (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) following the find by a patrol of 2 Land Cruiser Toyota abandoned in snow and ruts and 2 searches conducted at the home and outbuildings of a senior district police official and a partner in crime.<sup>39</sup>

## NEPAL

**October 27, 2018**

**Kohalpur, Banke District, Province No. 5, Nepal**

Man Bahadur Shahi (31 years old) was arrested in the night at his home. He was in possession of 2 red panda skins (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I).<sup>39bis</sup>

## PAKISTAN

**January 8, 2019**

**Chitral Gol National Park, Chitral District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan**

Poaching of a male markhor (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I). A wanton act. Dismay among NGOs. Polemic in Shoghor. The village is calling for the release of Aslam Baig, the alleged poacher. He has been identified as the one attacking the markhor by park watchers with binoculars but villagers claim to have seen him playing football at the same time. The Minister of Climate Change says he is in favor of sport hunting of markhor as practiced in 4 provinces of Pakistan. "It's a success story. Local communities conserve the animal and international hunters pay large sums for obtaining shooting licences." "Up to 80 per cent of the money generated from issuing markhor hunting permits is shared with the local community."<sup>40</sup>

## THAILAND

**October 6, 2018**

**Sai Yok National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand**

Forest rangers arrested 12 poachers driving in cars in the middle of a Saturday night in the Sai Yok National Park. Four binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India) feet were found in one of the vehicles, as well as a rifle with a silencer and a handgun. Binturong feet are the object of trafficking for "traditional medicine." It could have been a rather ordinary case, except that Vacharachai Sammerak – a senior District official – and 2 civil servants were among the group. The Minister of the Interior suspended Vacharachai Sammerak and the 2 civil servants until further notice.<sup>41</sup>

## VIET NAM

**October 4, 2018**

**Da Nang Municipality, South Central Coast Region, Viet Nam**

A tea stall was keeping a wounded Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India) locked in a cage. Thanks to a call to the hotline at Education for Nature – Vietnam, the animal was confiscated by the Son Tra Forest Protection Department. They took the civet to their facility to cure the wound before releasing her.<sup>42</sup>

**November 28, 2018**

**Vung Tau Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 2 Ozston's palm civets (*Chrotogale owstoni*) from a private individual. They will be transferred to the Cuc Phuong Natural Park.<sup>43</sup>

## EUROPE

### SPAIN

**October 2018**

**Villatobas, Province of Toledo, Autonomous Community of Castile-La Mancha, Spain**

Seizure of 17 European hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) in a car after it was caught speeding (166 km/h) on the AP-36 motorway. The driver, well known to the police, tried not to respond to police orders. Four arrests. The European hedgehog is protected in the European Union (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 51, n° 16 p. 94, n°19 p. 119, n°21 p. 107).<sup>44</sup>

### SWITZERLAND

**December 2018**

**Basel, Basel-Stadt Canton, Switzerland**

Arrest in a train connecting Basel, Switzerland and Domodossola, Italy, of an Indian citizen in possession of 122 stoles, including 5 in shatoosh, Tibetan antelope wool (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I). To weave a stole, 2 to 5 antelopes must be poached. Unlike vicuñas in South America, Tibetan antelopes do not support capture. To be sheared, they must be slaughtered. A stole sells for 20,000 Swiss francs (20,000 US\$). In 2015, Swiss customs seized 72 stoles in shatoosh, 34 in 2017.<sup>45</sup>

**December 3, 2018**

**France**

Dream or revolution.

The haute-couture line Chanel announces that it will renounce the use of exotic skins for clothes and leather goods. "It is more and more difficult to procure exotic skins corresponding to our ethical material demands." Skins of crocodiles, lizards, snakes, sharks (shagreen) are especially noted. Chanel's ambition is to propose a new production of high end products founded "on creativity, high quality materials, and innovative, exceptional finishing touches."



# Multi-Species

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**December 21, 2018**

#### Gauteng Province, South Africa

He was selling a chameleon (family Chamaeleonidae) by the side of the road. At his home, other animals were seized: 3 spotted eagle-owls (*Bubo africanus*, Appendix II), 4 common barn-owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), 3 vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II), 2 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II), one puff adder (*Bitis arietans*), one large spotted genet (*Genetta tigrina*), 6 turtles, one meerkat (*Suricata suricatta*), 5 pigeons and one piebald crow (*Corvus albus*). He claims to have "saved" all 28 wild animals.<sup>1</sup>

### ALGERIA

**December 2018**

#### Mostaganem Province, Algeria

El Watan has denounced widespread poaching, in all seasons, day and night, of partridges and hares, and their illegal sale along the side of the road, in markets and in souks. Between the lines, it is suggested that there is collusion with hunting associations.<sup>2</sup>

### COTE D'IVOIRE

**January 31, 2018**

#### Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Seizure of 7 crocodile skins, one python skin, one serval skin, 2 civet skins, 2 leopard skins and 3 ratel skins, parts of hippos and elephants and living cobras in Abdoulaye Sanogo's shop and home. Sanogo is both a wildlife trader and imam in Adjamé district.<sup>3</sup>



### GUINEA

**October 22, 2018**

#### Republic of Guinea

Follow-up to "On the Trail" n°22 p. 107.

Mamadou Dia, head of the Wildlife Division at the National Department for Water and Forests, has been arrested. He had secretly signed a pseudo-authorization to hunt in the undeclared Sabouya "reserve" (25,000 ha)



for a certain Carlos Bustamante Corces, a Spanish national. He has been receiving at least the equivalent of 3300 US\$ per year since 2005. Carlos and his assistant, Camara, did business on the Internet in the United States and particularly on the website "Book Your Hunt." They sold hunting rights at competitive prices, 5000 US\$ for an elephant, 3000 US\$ for a leopard, 1800 US\$ for a hippopotamus. The threesome are now in prison. Joint efforts by the judicial police department, Interpol and the Guinean Application of Wildlife Law (GALF) made the investigation successful. The law has other civil servants on the radar as well.<sup>4</sup>

**December 3, 2018**

#### Conakry, Conakry Region, Guinea

In the suburbs of Conakry, Mamadou Oury Barry, a professional hunter, has been indicted for possessing, transporting and attempting to sell the skin of a golden cat (*Profelis aurata*, Appendix II), and of a spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*).<sup>5</sup>



## KENYA



### October 2018

The daily routine of 10 mixed patrols of rangers, of the dog brigade and the DSWT in the Tsavo Conservation Area and Meru National Park in northern Kenya:

- 8 poaching in the act.
- 30 arrests, including woodcutters.
- Discovery of 2 carcasses with the tusks in place, and a skull with 2 tusks.



- Seizure of 52 weapons including rifles, bows and poisoned darts.
- Destruction of several poaching camps and abandoned firing platforms and charcoal furnaces, disused, in operation or under construction.
- Removal of 427 traps.
- Rescue of a zebra caught in a trap in a salt lick area.



- Expulsion of 2 herds from illegal grazing and sequestration in 2 KWS pens.
- Observation of extinguished bushfires. Putting out of a fire.
- Arrest of a gang of khat pickers.
- Tree planting with schoolchildren.
- Attempting to free an elephant stuck in the mud.<sup>6</sup>

January 8, 2019

### Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

Seizure in a house suspected of harboring a clandestine slaughterhouse and giving off an unbearable smell according to the neighbors, of 500 kg of rotting suspected dog and bushmeat, 12 elephant tusks, 2 statuettes, ivory bracelets and necklaces, a leopard skin, a rhinoceros horn and an African spurred tortoise. The 0.94 kg horn is estimated at 1.8 million shillings (about 17,700 US\$), the 12 tusks at 4 million shillings (about 39,500 US\$). Arrest of 3 Chinese citizens, Mrs. Yun, Mr. Jie and Mr. Wei. They witnessed the police search and claimed to be in the service of a prominent politician, without naming him. Mr. Wei is also charged with illegal operation of a supermarket. The meat has been dumped.<sup>7</sup>



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## MADAGASCAR

January 29, 2019

### Ambatolampy, Vakinankaratra Region, Antananarivo Province, Madagascar

Seizure on the RN7 of 8 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) or Madagascar tortoises (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) and 6 kg of dried seahorses on board a bush-taxi headed towards Tana from Toliara, more than 1,000 km away. The 3 passengers are heard by the police.<sup>8</sup>

## MALAWI

December 2018

### Malawi

Parliament has rejected the abolition of the law on the sport hunting and the export of trophies. Within 48 hours, a petition launched by Lilongwe Wildlife Trust collected 3500 signatures: "The law passed in 2017, which prohibits recreational/professional hunting of protected species, should be upheld. – Allowing foreign nationals to hunt for sport or pleasure is likely to confuse communities living around protected areas who themselves can be imprisoned for up to 30 years if they illegally kill wild animals."<sup>9</sup>



## NIGERIA

**December 2018**

### **Cross River National Park, Cross River State, Nigeria**

Three poachers were intercepted by rangers who were on a campaign to collect hundreds of metal traps. The campaign is backed by WCS, with funding from the Margot Marsh Biodiversity Foundation and the zoos of North Carolina.<sup>10</sup>



## UGANDA

**End of January 2019**

### **Kampala, Central Region, Uganda**

Three years in prison for an agent of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). He had been caught in fraudulent possession of 2 elephant tusks, 7 hippopotamus teeth and 7 warthog teeth.

"Omwony has served at the Ajai Wildlife center for 8 years. His verdict is evidence that nobody is above the law."<sup>11</sup>



**End of January 2019**

### **Nwoya District, Northern Region, Uganda**

Charles Komakech (19 years old) and Alfred Obedgiu (28 years old) were sentenced to one year in prison for poaching in Murchison Falls National Park.<sup>12</sup>



## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**October 4, 2018**

### **Owando, Cuvette Department, Republic of the Congo**

Henri Roland Botata was convicted and sentenced to 2 years in prison and 4330 US\$ in damages for poaching an elephant and a gorilla in the Ntokou-Pikounda National Park (see "On the Trail" n°22, p.108).<sup>13</sup>



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**October 14, 2018**

### **Kundelungu National Park, Haut-Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

A suspected poacher armed with a hunting rifle and ammunition was arrested in a car belonging to the brigade for the surveillance of illegal mining activities. The Kundelungu and Upemba Parks are full of shady characters. Rangers involved in poaching were arrested just one week earlier by their colleagues from the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN).<sup>14</sup>

## RWANDA

**GANG**

**October 23 and November 27, 2018**

### **Kabare, Akagera National Park and Ngoma District, Eastern Province, Rwanda**

A gang of poachers and butchers has been dismantled. In their bivouac in the park, rangers found rifles, 20 nets and a buffalo head. "They have a way of faulting the electric fence to break into the park and reconnect it after crossing." All 6, including one woman, have been sentenced to 5 years in prison and fines equivalent to 5600 US\$ each. They risked up to 7 years in prison and a fine equivalent to 8000 US\$. They do not poach by necessity. They were in business selling bushmeat. Several bags of smoked meat were found in their home.<sup>15</sup>



## TANZANIA

**Early November 2018**

### **Tanzania**

In 2015, Minister Lazaro Nyalandu banned sport hunting and hunting for bushmeat. This ban is lifted. According to the director of the TAWA (Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority), the national bushmeat hunters will have to apply for a license and present the hoofs, skins and other non-edible parts of the animals killed to the appropriate authorities. Sport hunters and trophy hobbyists will have 5 "sanctuaries" at their disposal: in the Manyara, Lindi, Singida, Tabora-Katavi regions and one in the coastal region. They will be open to diplomates, businessmen and other foreigners who have a residence permit in the country. However, most permits will be issued to hunters who come especially for the occasion from around the world, and especially the USA. They will pay 15,000 US\$ for the right to kill an elephant, 12,000 US\$ for a lion. They would each spend another 14,000 to 20,000 US\$ over the 10 to 21 days of the expedition, with taxidermy expenses in addition, if they want to bring their trophies home. In theory, only solitary elephants and old sterile lions and lionesses can be hunted. The other species that are targeted are hippopotamuses and crocodiles. 146 villages live in part off the revenues from photography safaris and now once again hunting safaris. The government justifies its decision by the need to consolidate wildlife conservation through financial revenue from "sustainable" hunting.<sup>16</sup>

## ZAMBIA

### Mid-January 2019 Solwezi, North West Province, Zambia

Sentencing of Mr. Biriati Tombo to a fine of 90,000 kwachas (6,600 US\$) or, if failure to pay, to 3 years' imprisonment for transporting and offering for sale 14 kg of bushbuck meat (*Tragelaphus scriptus*), 27 kg of baboon meat (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), 3 kg of warthog meat (*Phacochoerus africanus*) and 3 kg of common duiker meat (*Sylvicapra grimmia*).<sup>17</sup>



## AMERICA

## ARGENTINA

### October 10 and 17, 2018 Neuquén and Centenario, Neuquén Province, Argentina

- Following an anonymous telephone call, seizure in a private home of 9 Darwin's rheas (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II) including 2 adults, as well as 22 eggs, 3 elegant crested tinamous (*Eudromia elegans*), 8 red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), 2 yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), 2 southern wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis chilensis*, Appendix II), 2 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), 2 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), a stuffed deer, various accessories for catching birds and an egg incubator.

- Seizure of 8 red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), 8 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and cage-traps.<sup>18</sup>



*Eudromia elegans*

## OPERATION NOA'S ARCH

### Mid-December 2018 La Plata, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina

- Seized from death's door: 9 deer, 3 peafowls (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and 3 rheas (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II), all alive but destined for the taxidermist's.

- Seizure of 60 skulls, antlers, skins and other parts of pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II), Geoffroy's cats (*Leopardus geoffroyi*, Appendix I), jaguars (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), boars (*Sus scrofa*), foxes, deer, of

a shark jaw and, in the freezers, of organs and meat of armadillos, monkeys, flamingos and felines. The accounting books, cell phones, equipment and taxidermist's gear were also seized.<sup>19</sup>



### End of January 2019 Province of Cordoba, Argentina

Seizures of 5 black-backed grosbeaks (*Pheucticus aureoventris*) from "trappers", 6 rheas (*Rhea* spp. Appendix I or II) from a house in town and 8 Argentine tortoises (*Chelonoidis chilensis*, Appendix II) from a vet. In the province in January, environmental police rescued 145 wild animals from captivity.<sup>20</sup>



## BRAZIL

## REPEATED OFFENSE

### Early October 2018 Patos, State of Paraíba, Brazil

Valdivino Honório de Jesus was sentenced to 12 years in prison. A repeat offender, specialist in birds and turtles. 12 years in prison after 20 years of trafficking.<sup>21</sup> See "On the Trail" n°21 p. 109.



### October 3, 2018 Curitiba, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure in a private home of 132 birds including 17 parrot fledglings (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), 4 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) and one marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II). One arrest.<sup>22</sup>

### October 9, 2018 Unaí, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Seizure in a freezer of a capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and a tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II), both cut and of 2 parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II) in captivity, a rifle, 12 cartridges. The meat was thrown in the dump and the birds were given to an animal shelter to be examined. One arrest. Fine equivalent to 8000 US\$.<sup>23</sup>



**October 10, 2018**

**Francisco Morato, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

A house-zoo. Police discovered 400 wild animals, including macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II) and marmosets (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II), enclosed in boxes made of plastic, wood or cardboard and in cages. Four arrests: 2 at 4 a.m. in a car transporting new prisoners; 2 in the neighboring house.<sup>24</sup>

**October 29, 2018**

**Bauru, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

The hood of the car shows : seizure of an arsenal, as well as a parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 kg of collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II) and armadillo (family Daspoyidae) meat, plus an armadillo shell and a coati skin (genus *Nasua*).<sup>25</sup>



**Early November 2018**

**Criciúma, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil**



**WhatsApp**

The police infiltrated a WhatsApp group skilled in the trade of macaws, parrots and monkeys. Seizure of 2 parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), a green-winged saltator (*Saltator similis*), a double-collared seedeater (*Sporophila caeruleascens*), an ultramarine grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*) and of a marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II).<sup>26</sup>

**November 12, 2018**

**Macapá, Amapá State, Brazil**

Seizure of 42 turtles and capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*). Several turtles had died because of the transport conditions. They were piled up in big bags. The car came from Amapá, 300 km away. The survivors were released into the wild. The capybara meat will be used to feed a jaguar for a month in the Santana private reserve, 17 km from Macapá. The reserve administration complains about the intensity of urban noise that disturbs its residents, especially fireworks during football matches and New Year's holidays. The last incident took place on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. and the jaguar tried to jump over the fences and clung to the links of the fence. He had to have surgery. Other animals have been panicked by noise pollution.<sup>27</sup>

**November 22, 2018**

**Cotia and São Paulo, São Paulo State, Brazil**

Fine of 16,000 real (4,440 US\$). Seizure of 32 wild birds, some of which belong to endangered species: 4 white common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II), 6 black-pencilled marmosets (*Callithrix penicillata*, Appendix II) and one tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II).<sup>28</sup>



**End of November 2018**

**Taubaté, State of São Paulo, Brazil**



**WhatsApp**

Seizure of 6 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 5 Brazilian whiptail lizards (*Cnemidophorus natio* and *Kentropyx altamazonica*) and 3 Brazilian scarlet birdeater tarantulas (*Vitalius sorocabae*). The animals had been locked in 2 packages for 8 days without air intake and without room to move. Two people are each fined 53,800 real (14,500 US\$) for cruelty to animals, transport and possession of protected animals. They claim they didn't know what was inside the boxes. Their role would have been to store and deliver them just in time and at the agreed place after receiving instructions via WhatsApp.<sup>29</sup>



**December 4, 2018**

**Between Franca, State of São Paulo and Ibiraci, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil**

Found on the side of the road: several stuffed animals, including parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), a forest fox (*Cerdocyon thous*, Appendix II), a maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*, Appendix II), curassows (genus *Crax*), a red-legged seriema (*Cariama cristata*) and an urubu (family Cathartidae).<sup>30</sup>

**December 13, 2018**

**Bauru, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Road block inspection. Seizure of a toucan chick (family Ramphastidae) and a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonym for *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) hidden in a blanket.<sup>31</sup>



**Mid-December 2018**  
**State of Rio Grande do Sul, WhatsApp**  
**Brazil**

An environmentalist infiltration of WhatsApp groups devoted to hunting confirmed that registered boar hunters (30,000 according to the IBAMA, 70,000 according to the military police) actually indulge in illegal hunting of other mammals such as deer, ant-eaters, armadillos, coatis (genus *Nasua*) and South American raccoons (*Procyon cancrivorus*).<sup>32</sup>

**December 18, 2018**  
**Concórdia do Pará, State of Pará, Brazil**

Seizure of a cobra (family *Elapidae*), a raptor (*Accipitridae* or *Falconidae*, Appendix I or II) and a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) from an individual who has fled.<sup>33</sup>

**December 29, 2018**  
**Bailique Archipelago, State of Amapá, Brazil**

Seizure of 200 kg of meat from 4 capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and one caiman (*Alligatoridae*, Appendix I or II). The meat was discarded.<sup>34</sup>

**January 7, 2019**  
**Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil**

Seizure of a boa (*Boidae*, Appendix I or II) and a blue-and-gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) on a farm. The boa was immediately released but the macaw will first have to get used to the wildlife in a specialized school.<sup>35</sup>



**January 17, 2019**  
**Río de Janeiro and Itaguaí, Río de Janeiro State, Brazil**

Many seizures in Rio State, but no arrests. Among the hundreds of animals offered for sale on the Internet were hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I), capuchin monkeys (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II), toucans (*Ramphastidae* family) or blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). A blue macaw sold for about 15,500 US\$. The buyers claim to have been deceived, the sale was accompanied by forged certificates from an approved breeder in the State of Sao Paulo.<sup>36</sup>

**End of January 2019**  
**Curitiba, State of Paraná, Brazil**

Seizures in 3 different locations of 15 wild birds and one monkey (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II). The monkey had lived in the Portao area for nearly 30 years. Three people were arrested.<sup>37</sup>



On the Trail #23. Robin des Bois

**January 29, 2019**  
**Macapá, Amapá State, Brazil**

Seizure of more than 400 kg of caiman (*Alligatoridae*, Appendix I or II), capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), armadillo (*Dasypodidae* family), agouti (genus *Dasyprocta*) meat and a live turtle of 60 cm and 40 kg. She was released.<sup>38</sup>



**January 31, 2019**  
**Ports of Macapa and Santana, Amapá State, Brazil**

Seizure on board a passenger boat of about 100 kilograms of wild animal meat, including armadillo (*Dasypodidae* family) and agouti (genus *Dasyprocta*) and 80 kg of fish poached in the Amazon, including Oscar (*Astronotus ocellatus*), aimara (*Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus*), long-whiskered catfish of the genus *Hypophthalmus*, flat-whiskered catfish (*Pinirampus pirinampu*) and angelfish (genus *Pterophyllum*).<sup>39</sup>



## COLOMBIA

**October 14, 2018**  
**Bogotá, Colombia**

Two yellow-crowned Amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and 16 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) rescued from captivity, trafficking and neglect in 4 simultaneous operations by the environmental police. "Los animales silvestres no son mascotas."<sup>40</sup>



**November 20, 2018**  
**Cali, Valle del Cauca Department, Colombia**

The new farm owner "inherited" 6 white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 2 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), a toucan (family Ramphastidae) and a woolly monkey (*Lagothrix* spp., Appendix II). It took 6 hours for the experts from the Biodes Foundation to catch the deer, one male and 5 females. All of the animals are being examined in a zoo.<sup>41</sup>



**End of January 2019**  
**Puerto Carreño, Department of Vichada, Colombia**

Two men were arrested with 58 eggs of yellow-headed sideneck (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) and one oncilla skin (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I) valued at approximately 1,760 US\$.<sup>42</sup>



## COSTA RICA

**November 24, 2018**  
**Corcovado National Park, Puntarenas Province, Costa Rica**

Twelve clandestine gold panners working in the rivers of the national park were also poaching. At their base camp: marijuana, great curassow eggs (*Crax rubra*, Appendix III) and turtle eggs.

Native throughout all of Central America, the great curassow lives in rainforests and sometimes in mangroves. The bird can be up to 1m tall and flies very little. He is trapped for his meat and to be used as a pet. Victim like so many others of deforestation and fragmentation of his habitat, he remains relatively present in protected areas that are sufficiently far from human activity.<sup>43</sup>



*Crax rubra*

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**October 15, 2018**

### **State of Idaho, United States of America**

Blake Fischer, director of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission, appointed by the State governor and confirmed by the State senate, was forced to resign. He and his wife went to have some fun in Namibia. They killed a family of baboons (*Papio spp.*n Appendix II), a giraffe (genus *Giraffa*), a leopard, antelopes, a gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*), an eland (*Taurotragus oryx*) and a sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*, Appendix I), at least 14 wild animals, and sent triumphal photos to a hundred friends – who were not all friends.



His hunting trophies leaked and, although his victims were killed by a bow and arc, his career was ruined by a volley of furious tweets from Idaho and the rest of the world.

Bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) and wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) hunting in Idaho under Blake Fischer's administration was often the subject of controversy and blame, not necessarily by the courts, but by public opinion. (See "On the Trail" n°22 p.72, n°8 p.95-96, n°13 p.99.)<sup>44</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

### **Oklahoma City, State of Oklahoma, United States of America**

Joseph Maldonado-Passage, former zoo-keeper and candidate for governor of Oklahoma is in custody. He is suspected of attempting to recruit a hit man. His idea was to get rid of Carole Baskin, director of a wildlife shelter in Florida.

Maldonado, alias Joe Exotic, is now facing new charges: he is suspected of killing 5 tigers in order to make room in his cages for new "big cats" and selling or attempting to sell tiger cubs, a lion cub and a baby lemur (families lemuridae, indriidae or lepitemuridae, Appendix I) outside of Oklahoma, claiming that the animals were given or transferred for a temporary exhibit.<sup>45</sup>



**Late November 2018**

### **San Diego, State of California, United States of America**



Seizure at the Carlton Gallery, a high-end antique shop, of over 300 items made of elephant ivory and hippopotamus teeth, and worth a total value of 1.3 million US\$. 146 items were seized directly at the shop, and 192 in a warehouse. The owner, Victor Hyman Cohen, and his salesman, Sheldon Miles Kupersmith, risk several years in prison and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines.<sup>46</sup>

**November and December 2018**

### **States of New Jersey and Hawaii, United States of America**

After New-Jersey, Hawaii bans the use of exotic and dangerous animals in circuses and carnivals for public safety reasons. The list of animals that are forbidden includes lions, tigers and big cats, bears, wolves, rhinos, hippopotamuses, alligators, crocodiles, gorillas and chimpanzees.

Importation remains authorized for zoos and movie filming, but is subject to issuance of a permit from the State department of agriculture.<sup>47</sup>

**December 19, 2018**

### **Alexandria, State of Virginia, United States of America**



Keith Foster, antique dealer in Middleburg at a shop called "The Outpost" has pleaded guilty to importing 100 stuffed animals, including crocodiles (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), sea turtles (Appendix I) and sword fish (Pristidae, Appendix I) without a permit.<sup>48</sup>



**9-12 January 2019**  
**Reno, State of Nevada, United States**



The items on sale at the Safari Club International Reno Convention, also known as “Hunters’ Paradise”, are against Nevada law. For example, paintings on elephant skins and ears, boots, belts or saddles made of elephant, rhino, shark or ray leather could be found there. Elephant skin paintings can cost up to 3,500 US\$, while a ray leather belt is worth nearly 400 US\$. Hippopotamus teeth were for sale for 3.5 US\$ per ounce, or 123.5 US\$ per kilo. A pedestal table supported by a hippopotamus skull was also for sale. There were also carved mammoth tusks or an elephant skin bench. The sale of elephant or hippo parts is prohibited in the State of Nevada, except for antiques that are at least 100 years old and accompanied by indisputable documents. This exploration of the Safari Club International exhibition was carried out by the NGO Humane Society International.<sup>49</sup>



**January 10, 2019**  
**Houston, State of Texas, United States of America**

Sentencing of Ms. Annsley Popov to 3 years’ probation including restrictions on her freedom of movement, a fine of 30,000 US\$ and 500 hours per year for 3 years of community service for illegally detaining 202 pairs of sandals, 4 wallets made of python skin (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) and 131 manta ray skin bracelets (*Manta* spp., Appendix II). The Presmer LLC company led by Mrs. Popov was fined 120,000 US\$.<sup>50</sup>



**MEXICO**

**October 10, 2018**  
**Mexico City, Mexico**

Three lions, 2 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) and a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) were being held in conditions (housing, feeding, care, public safety) that were noncompliant with LGVS (Ley General de Vida Silvestre).<sup>51</sup>

**October 10, 2018**  
**Tijuana, State of Baja California, Mexico**

An approximately one-year-old tiger cub (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) and 8 Morelet’s crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I) were in separate cardboard boxes in the back of a small truck. The chauffeur and his passenger presented the police with phony sales certificates. The Tijuana prosecutor has launched an investigation to ascertain the origin and destination of the animals.<sup>52</sup>

**October 26, 2018**  
**Hermosillo, State of Sonora, Mexico**

Seizure of 3 tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), one lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 23 southern wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis chilensis*, Appendix II), one primate and one Morelet’s crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I) in a private zoo that was not registered with SEMARNAT (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales). They were entrusted to CEDES (Centro Ecológico de Sonora). One interrogation.<sup>53</sup>



**October 28, 2018**  
**Puebla, State of Puebla, Mexico**

Seizure in 2 suitcases deposited at the left luggage office at the bus station: 30 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 3 boas constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 3 Mexican spiny-tailed iguanas (*Ctenosaura pectinata*), 4 Mexican parrot snakes (*Leptophis mexicanus*) and 120 turtles (2 *Staurotypus triporcatus*, 29 genus *Trachemys*, 89 genus *Kinosternon*). The live “articles” came from Veracruz. Probable destination: Mexico City. Each of the 160 reptiles will be examined – freedom or captivity, their futures will depend on the conclusions. For the moment, they are with a UMA.<sup>54</sup>

**November 4, 2018**  
**Tenosique and Cunduacán, State of Tabasco, Mexico**

Release of a margay (*Leopardus wiedii*, App. I) in a protected area of the Usumacinta Canyon (46,000 ha). He had been turned in to the police by a private individual. Seizure of 9 common sliders (*Trachemys scripta*) and 4 white-lipped mud turtles (*Kinosternon leucostomum*) and Mexican musk turtles (*Staurotypus triporcatus*) on sale along the side of the road. The sekkler fled when PROFEPA agents appeared.<sup>55</sup>

## PARAGUAY

### Late December 2018 Asunción, Paraguay

- For sale at market n°4 (see "On the Trail" n°3 p. 28, n°7 p. 23, n°13 p. 106, n°16 p. 32, n°21 p. 35 and n°22 p. 115): one festive amazon (*Amazona festiva*, Appendix II) and 3 chaco tortoises (*Chelonoidis chilensis*, Appendix II). Transferred to a zoo for evaluation.<sup>56</sup>

- Attempted sale by the side of the road: a toucan (family Ramphastidae), 2 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), 2 turquoise-fronted Amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and one turtle. Transferred to a zoo to await release at a future time. Clemente Martínez was arrested thanks to assistance from the public.<sup>57</sup>



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## PERU

### Early October 2018

#### Juliaca, San Román Province, Puno Region, Peru

Seizure, at the Virgen de las Mercedes feria, of 194 animal parts: Andean condor talons (*Vultur gryphus*, Appendix I), vicuña hoofs (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II), Andean cat feet (*Leopardus jacobitus*, Appendix I), visachas feet (family Chinchillidae); and carcasses of Andean flamingos (*Phoenicoparrus andinus*, Appendix II), red-backed hawks (*Buteo polyosoma*, Appendix II), owls, Andean coots (*Fulica ardesiaca*) and ferrets along with fox furs, skunk skins and 250 g porcupine quills.<sup>58</sup>

### Late October 2018

#### Máncora, Talara Province, Piura Department, Peru

The police made a little visit to a beach resort and seized 2 green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and 2 shells, one skin, 2 feet and the skull of a black caiman (*Melanosuchus niger*, Appendix I), as well as 32 butterflies.<sup>59</sup>



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### December 13, 2018

#### Puerto Alegría, Department of Loreto, Peru. Border with Colombia and Brazil.

22 wild animals were seized and placed in shelters: an Amazonian manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*, Appendix I), a margay (*Leopardus wiedii*, Appendix I), several scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), a squirrel monkey (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II), an anaconda (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II), toucans (family Ramphastidae), 3 sloths and a porcupine, all exploited by residents and small businesses to satisfy the curiosity of tourists coming to Puerto Alegría on tour boats along the Amazon and eager to fill their photo albums with selfies.



© Kirsten Luce

In fact, most of the animals were seized on a wooden platform called the "selfie platform." There is considerable concern especially for the margay, whose fur is bare, and the manatee, whose exact age is unknown and who is very thin. They were both sent to CREA (Centro de Rescate Amazónico), located 370 km from Puerto Alegría. The intervention, which displeased the townspeople, was carried out under the authority of the departmental public prosecutor, by a team of thirty police officers, veterinarians, and a US Fish and Wildlife advisor. It was prepared by the Colombia-based NGO Entropika. Wildlife and selfie tourism in Peru, and in many other countries in the world, results in the capture and abuse of wild animals that are taken from the wild, and then discarded and replaced, like disposable objects, when they die or become less presentable.<sup>60</sup>



January 22, 2019

La Victoria District, Lima Province, Peru

Seizure of 401 animal parts from “healers” stands, including 152 chopped frogs (genus *Telmatobius*) and 60 chopped toads (genus *Rhinella*), 33 fox legs and tails (genus *Pseudalopex*, synonymous with *Lycalopex*), common anaconda heads and tails (*Eunectes murinus*, Appendix II), 10 monkey legs (*Saguinus* spp., Appendix I or II), 13 tusks of Patagonian sea lions (*Otaria flavescens*), oncilla claws (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), toucan beaks (Ramphastidae family), 9 hairy armadillo legs (*Chaetophractus nationi*, Appendix II). Additional seizure of 82 starfishes (Asteroidea class), 35 sunflower sea stars (*Pycnopodia helianthoides*), 2 shark jaws and 14 kg of palo santo (*Bursera graveolens*), a critically endangered species used as incense because of the aroma it gives off when it ignites.<sup>61</sup>



## EL SALVADOR

January 9, 2018

Acajutla, Sonsonate Department, El Salvador

Seizure in a restaurant of a spider monkey (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), a raccoon (genus *Procyon*), a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and 3 turtles. The owner, Xenia L., was released because she did not oppose the seizure. Some animals were found chained, surrounded by garbage and malnourished. Only the turtles have been released into their natural environment. The iguana will not, the claws of his hind legs having been torn off.<sup>62</sup>



January 18, 2019

San Miguel, Department of San Miguel, El Salvador

Seizure on a farm of 5 white-tailed deers (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 2 spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), a white-faced capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II) and a crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), released the same day into appropriate natural environments. The animals were considered zoo animals and exposed to the view of visitors.<sup>63</sup>



## ASIA

### CAMBODIA

October 28, 2018

Steung Treng, Steung Treng Province, Cambodia

Bushmeat continues to be sold in the province, despite punitive measures taken by the authorities and awareness-raising campaigns led by NGOs. At the Stung Treng market, shoppers can still find muntjac meat (*Muntiacus* spp., Appendix I), as well as deer, boar, banteng (*Bos javanicus*), snake and turtle meat. According to Roth Sary, a market seller, business is less consistent and more discreet.<sup>64</sup>

November 12, 2018

Daeum Chan, Chbar Ampov District, Municipality of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Seizure in a sculpture workshop of elephant and boar tusks, deer antlers and bones, bear's teeth and 30 miniature sculptures of Buddha. The workshop manager, Mok Teprasei, 22 years old, and his employees say that they are not the ones who purchase and own the parts of protected species. They make special order sculptures for private individuals who bring in the animal remains to be used.<sup>65</sup>

December 24, 2018

Chreav, Krong Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia

Residents informed the Forestry Department that wildlife traffickers from Thailand were going through their town after crossing the border at the O'Beichoan border post. They then headed toward Siem Reap or Phnom Penh. Agents set up road blocks on National Road 6 to check vehicles. On Monday, 2 Toyota Highlanders with 6 men on board fell into the trap. They were transporting 78 live turtles and 53 water monitors (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), including 17 who were already dead. While the agents were searching one of the cars, the 6 traffickers jumped in the other one and drove away. They were caught and brought to justice. The surviving reptiles were released in Lake Tonlé Sap.<sup>66</sup>

January 14, 2019

Kampong Spoe Province, Cambodia

Seizure at a bushmeat trafficker's house of 14 pairs of Malayan sun bear claws (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), an Indian river terrapin (*Batagur baska*, Appendix I), a yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, App. II), 5 Asiatic softshell turtles (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II), an elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), 3 giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II), one Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 1.5 kg of common palm civet meat (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India), 6 kg of wild boar meat (*Sus scrofa*) and 4 kg of Indian muntjac meat (*Muntiacus muntjak*). During the search, the WRRT (Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team) team saw a bag in the garden of the neighboring house. They found 10 Asiatic softshell turtles

(*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II), 10kg of wild boar meat (*Sus scrofa*), 2.5 kg of Indian muntjac meat (*Muntiacus muntjak*) and 6.3 kg of common palm civet meat (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India). The 2 traffickers were sentenced to preliminary fines of 1,342 US\$ and 1,335 US\$.<sup>67</sup>

**January 30, 2019**

**Cardamom National Park, Cambodia**

While fleeing at a roadside checkpoint, the suspect threw a plastic container. This time, the lesser mousedeer (*Tragulus kanchil*) had already suffocated to death, the Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India) and the slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) were not far from it. They were finally rehabilitated with food and water. They were released at night.<sup>68</sup>

**CHINA**

**October 25, 2018**

**Xiamen, Fujian Province, China**

Customs agents seized 6 bottles of scorpion and cobra (genus *Naja*) alcohol.<sup>69</sup>



**November 2, 2018**

**Tuen Mun, Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China**

James Chai, an "animal lover" and director of an animal crematorium, the Rainbow Bridge Pet Cremation, was holding in captivity: a Jullien's golden carp (*Probarbus jullieni*, Appendix I), a slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), 3 wood owls (*Strix* spp., Appendix II), 2 otters (*Lutrinae* spp., Appendix I or II), 4 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), 4 giant salamanders (*Andrias* spp., Appendix I), a black pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), 2 hawks (family Accipitridae, Appendix I or II) and a monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). He was sentenced to 160 hours of community work and 35,000 HK\$ (4400 US\$) in fines. The new criminal code calls for up to one year in prison and 100,000 HK\$ if the culprit has an animal listed on Appendix I according to national legislation and to CITES, which was Chai's case. The judges compared the domestic confinement of wild animals to "slow euthanasia."<sup>70</sup>



**November 20, 2018**

**Yunnan Province, China**

China News reported a seizure on May 10, 2018 of a large number of wildlife products, and in particular, 27 worked ivories, 3 hornbill helmets (family Bucerotidae), 3 leopard cat skulls (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), a Tibetan gazelle horn (*Procapra picticaudata*) and 247.5 g of pangolin scales. Total estimated value: 1.21 million yuan (191,000 US\$).<sup>71</sup>



**November 23, 2018**

**Kunming, Yunnan Province, China**

Seizure of 702 animals, dead and alive, and animal parts: 2 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), 8 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I), a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), all alive; 218 articles made of ivory, 2 helmeted hornbill skulls (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I), 23 tiger bones, 45 fragments of rhinoceros horn, lynx parts (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II) and wild camel parts (family Camelidae), 6 lion's teeth and one lion bone, a snow leopard skin (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I), 24 Mongolian gazelle horns (*Procapra gutturosa*), 3 clouded leopard bones (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), one brown bear bone (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix I), 2 radiated tortoise shells; 10 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), 17 elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II) and 14 leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II), all stuffed. Overall value equivalent to 530,000 US\$. Ten arrests, suspects in custody. 19 suspects under pre-trial supervision. For the past 2 years, the Internet sales network had been directed by an individual with no reported profession, living in Kunming and working with middlemen and regular clients in 24 of the 33 Chinese provinces.<sup>72</sup>



## GANG

### November 2018 Shaanxi Province, China

Interpellation of 48 suspects. Under the patronage of a farmer who knew Taibai Mountain well, the gang, divided into 4 teams was specialist in electric poaching. Big batteries were found in several barns. Seizure in freezers of 1000 wild animal carcasses from the most humble, the rabbit, to the most prestigious, the black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I). The preputial glands of musk deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II) and bear paws were carefully set aside. With the guaranteed wild meat, they were sold in 6 provinces at a high price for private banquets or restaurants known for their wild meat. The investigator indicates that paws and preputial glands were sometimes used to buy the silence of a few people or well-informed services.<sup>73</sup>



### December 2018 Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Dismantling in several phases of a network of importers, transporters, sellers and buyers of protected species in spare parts:

- Seizure of 150 batches of animal parts, including pangolin scales, hawksbill turtle shells, ivory, elephant skin, tiger bones and rhino horns or horn fragments worth a total of 3 million yuan (449,000 US\$). The network was led by Yang "X" Xian, a woman operating a handcraft business and a female accomplice responsible for selling the products through Taobao and WeChat and delivering them throughout China, in particular Beijing and Shanghai. The scheme lasted more than 2 years and was supported by intermediate resellers. The overall profit would have brought in more than 10 million yuan (1.49 million US\$). 15 arrests, including one foreign national. The investigation began in June 2017.

- Seizure from a business specialist in rosewood furniture of 81.49 kilograms of pangolin scales, 1595 python gallbladders, 7 hawksbill turtle shells, ivory and rhino horns with an estimated total value of 17.651 million yuan (around 2.6 million US\$). Four arrests, 2 brothers and a couple of fellows. The investigation began in June 2018.

- Seizure of worked ivories, 5 tiger skins and 3 lion claws at the home of a man who was a long-term Nanning resident and received 4 postal parcels purchased from 2 foreign nationals between January 2018 and August 2018. The total value of wildlife products smuggled is estimated at 4.164 million yuan (around 600,000 US\$). One arrest. The man was engaged in the making of lion wine. It is not clear whether he sold it as "lion's wine" or "tiger's wine".



- December 9, 2018. After exploring the mobile phones of Yang "X" Xian, the main suspect, seizure of 4 tiger skins, a suspected tiger vertebra and penis. The total value of the lot is estimated at 3.3 million yuan (around 500,000 US\$).

- December 13. Seizure of tiger skin in the city of Wuxi. One arrest.

- December 18. Seizure of worked ivories and tiger skin from a Shanghai resident. One arrest. The total value of the lot is estimated at 1.6 million yuan (around 200,000 US\$).

To date, the total value of all wildlife products seized is therefore nearly 30 million yuan (around 4.3 million US\$) plus 2 cars, 4 electric scales and a bone crusher.<sup>74</sup>

## GANG

### December 28, 2018 Nanyang, Henan Province, China

Revelation by the Henan Daily newspaper of the dismantling of a gang covering Viet Nam, the Tibet Autonomous Region, Hebei, Fujian, Hubei, Shandong and Beijing provinces. Seizure of 3 tiger skins, 310 kg of raw and worked ivories, saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), hornbills (Bucerotidae family, 27 species in Appendix I or II) and Tibetan gazelle horns (*Procapra picticaudata*). The total value of the seizure is estimated at about 15 million yuan (2.17 million US\$). Three sentences of 6, 10 and 12 years' imprisonment. The investigation was conducted from December 2016 to mid-February 2017. The trial took place on August 6, 2018.<sup>75</sup>



### December 2018 Qinghai Province, China

Seizure by the forest services and the police of 26 dead animals including a wild yak (*Bos grunniens*, Appendix I), a Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I), a Przewalski's gazelle (*Procapra przewalskii*), a bear, a Mongolian gazelle (*Procapra gutturosa*), a vulture, a great bharal (*Pseudois nayaur*, Appendix III in Pakistan), an eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II), a tawny eagle (*Aquila rapax*, Appendix II) and a red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) or parts thereof, poaching and taxidermy equipment.<sup>76</sup>

December 19, 2018

Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Press conference by the Nanning customs office. Status report since 2016.

Seizure of 707.78 kg of ivory, 2578 pangolins, 51.79 kg of rhinoceros horns, 20 giant clams (family Tridacninae), 172 hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I). The other animal and plant species include long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) and some rosewood (*Dalbergia odorifera*).

The customs office stressed the importance of the porosity of the border with Viet Nam and how difficult it is to achieve strict, permanent control of smuggling between Viet Nam and China. They underlined the example of the historic ivory market between Africa, Viet Nam and China, as well as new potential developments through traffickers' use of Internet to program deliveries and pay for transactions.<sup>77</sup>

Some of those seizures were reported in "On the Trail" (n°12 p.92 and 111, n°13 p.37, 38, 93 and 107, n°14 p.33, n°16 p.39 and 102, n°17 p.18 and 41, n°18 p.7 and 38, n°20 p.53 and 102, n°21 p.17, 93 and 94, n°22 p.52, 53 and 82).



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January 21, 2019

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

Seizure from the belongings of a passenger of 18 nautilus shells (*Nautilus* spp., Appendix II), 28 sea turtle shell jewelry and 20 black coral jewelry (*Antipatharia*, Appendix II).<sup>78</sup>



© Chinese Customs

January 2019

China

Chinese customs 2018 track record:

175 cases of wildlife trafficking. Among them, the seizure in June 2018 from parrot farms and individuals of 567 birds including cockatoos (*Cacatuidae*, Appendix I or II), red macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), toucans (*Ramphastidae* family) and other parrots (order *Psittaciformes*), and 198 parrot eggs. The latter were smuggled into China, then hatched in Guangdong and Hunan provinces and finally resold throughout the country. The 5 months investigation allowed the arrest of 10 suspects.<sup>79</sup>

INDIA

October 2, 2018

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Last night, Netram (48 years old) was arrested in possession of a trap, a gun, a flashlight and a motorcycle. His 4 accomplices fled when they saw the forest rangers. Netram refused to give their names, but admitted that they were planning to poach "herbivores." He was sent to the Lakhimpur prison.<sup>80</sup>



GANG

October 6, 8 and 9, 2018

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata, State of West Bengal, Pune, State of Maharashtra, and Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu, India

A network of international traffickers has been dismantled. First, in Calcutta, Domnic Jacob Sequeira (40 years old) and an accomplice were arrested by agents from the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) at the airport. The 2 men had come to collect a delivery of 5 cages containing 35 animals. They had arrived by plane from Aizawl (in the State of Mizoram), but had entered India by road from Myanmar, with a driver by the name of Lalfingkima Sailo. Their point of origin was Bangkok (Thailand). Inside the cases, a multicolored menagerie rustled and whirred: 4 white cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, App. II, from Indonesia), one yellow-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*, App. II, Australia), 5 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, App. II, Oceania), 12 gray parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, App. I, Africa), one blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, App. II, South America), one silver macaw (hybrid, non-CITES), one knobbed hornbill (*Rhyticeros cassidix*, App. II, Indonesia), 2 birds-of-paradise (family *Paradisaeidae*, App. II, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea), 4 cassowary chicks (family *Casuariidae*, Oceania), 2 black and white rufous lemur (*Varecia variegata*, App. I, Madagascar), one baby marmoset (family *Callitrichidae*, App. I or II, South America) and one Bengal cat. Their total value may be as high as 8,555,000 rupees (124,600 US\$). As a cover, Domnic Jacob Sequeira owned a pet food company in Pune, Vandoes Pet Products and Services. He mentioned customers in Pune, Hyderabad and Bangalore. A raid in his company's facilities led to the arrest of an accomplice, and the seizure of 19 other birds: 15 lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., App. II), one sun parakeet (*Aratinga solstitialis*, App. II, South America), 2 great billed parrots (*Tanygnathus melalorynchos*, Appendix II, Philippines) and one white cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*, App. II, Indonesia). The next day in Chennai, 2 more raids were launched, one at a house in the city and one at a farm on the outskirts. Another trafficker was arrested and 70 animals were found, including scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, App. I), harlequin macaws (hybrids, non-CITES), blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, App. II), cockatoos (*Cacatuidae*, App. I or II), conures (*Psittacidae*, App. I or II), marmosets (*Callithrix* spp. or *Cebidae* spp., App. I or II) and a pair of iguanas (*Iguanidae* family). The investigation has not been closed yet.<sup>81</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Jammu, State of Jammu and Kashmir, India**

Agents from the Forest Department raided a shop in the Kanak Mandi neighborhood, following a tip. They seized musk deer glands and antlers (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II), monitor lizard penises (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), tiger and leopard claws (*Panthera tigris*, and *P. pardus* Appendix I), sea shells and protected plants.<sup>82</sup>



**Early November 2018**

**Malayattoor, State of Kerala, India**

Jomon and Anuraj were put in detention for 3 weeks. They were caught transporting the carcasses of cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*), Indian pond herons (*Ardeola grayii*) and Indian palm squirrels (*Funambulus palmarum*) in their cars.<sup>83</sup>

**December 13, 2018**

**Rasayani, Raigad District, State of Maharashtra, India**

The managers of the missile and rocket fuel plant of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) thought that their crime would go unnoticed. During the night, residents living near the plant smelled an acrid odor in the neighborhood. A corrosive and toxic dinitrogen tetroxide leak had just occurred. 31 monkeys – including 11 youngsters – and 14 pigeons present on the site died of intoxication. The next morning, plant workers collected the carcasses and buried them in a pit that they dug discreetly next door, on an unused site belonging to the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL). But an anonymous whistle-blower reported them to the forest administration, who raided the site. The grave was opened, the carcasses exhumed and autopsied. The investigation and interrogations (8 people were taken into custody) clearly revealed that the ISRO was responsible. Two scientists responsible for the site are being prosecuted.<sup>84</sup>



**GANG**

**December 19, 2018**

**Around Manamelkudi, Pudukkottai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Two couriers were nabbed following a tip given to the maritime police. In their vehicle, S. Sasikumar (29 years old) and A. Natarajan (40 years old) were transporting 200 seahorses, 20 sea cucumbers and 1600 common water monitors (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II) in a large bag. They are worth an estimated 45,000 rupees (644 US\$). According to the police, they belong to a gang of smugglers who export to Sri Lanka.<sup>85</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**December 20, 2018**

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

The Kumar family shop, in the city's main bazar, was selling various animal parts to insiders. Following intelligence sent from Delhi, the Forest Department first sent in a phony buyer, then carried out a raid. They conducted a search of the shop which continued until late in the night. The investigators found the body parts of 5 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 jackals (*Canis* spp.), 100 g of elephant ivory ground into powder and 10 caterpillars. Shivam Agarwal and Mohit Kumar, who managed the shop, were arrested. The owner is Mohit's father, Narendra Kumar.<sup>86</sup>



**December 26, 2018**

**Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Bahraich District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**



The international class golfer Jyoti Randhawa was arrested for poaching, to the delight of the Indian tabloids. The Bollywood actress Chitrangada Singh's ex-husband was stopped by forest rangers one morning as he came out of the wildlife sanctuary, driving his SUV. His caddie, Mahesh Virajdar – a former navy captain who was discharged following a court martial – was at his side. The vehicle was searched, leading to the seizure of 2 freshly killed red junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*), one sambar deer skin (*Rusa unicorn*), a telescope-mounted .22 caliber rifle fitted with a silencer, 80 cartridges, range finders and binoculars. Jyoti Randhawa tried to bribe the forest rangers, but they remained uncompromising. The 2 men were placed in detention under remand for 14 days.<sup>87</sup>

**December 28, 2018**

**Midpu, Papum Pare District, State of Arunachal Pradesh, India**

Productive roadblocks conducted jointly by the police and the Forest Department at the entrance to a village located 12 km from the State capital. Seizures of approximately 2 kg of pangolin scales, the carcasses of one deer, 5 civets (family Viverridae), one mongoose (*Herpestes* genus), some squirrels (*Ratufa* spp., Appendix II) and wild birds. The agents also seized 2 trucks loaded with illegally logged wood, as well as 2 bags on "ganja." Given the results, the director of the Forest Department announced that other blocks would be set up on all of the roads leading to Itanagar.<sup>88</sup>

**January 4, 2019**

**Film City, Goregaon, Mumbai Suburban District, Maharashtra State, India**

A true worst-case scenario! Poachers roam Film City, the flagship studio of Bollywood productions, accessible by train and bus from downtown Mumbai. A gutted leopard carcass and a decapitated Sambar deer carcass were found under branches near the location of a TV series shooting. 30 active traps were removed from the 2.5 km<sup>2</sup> area of Film City. Five poachers aged 20 to 32 are the stars of this bad movie. They're in custody for 3 days. The investigators were asking for 10 days. After selling the meat within their tribes or in neighboring communities, Rahul Habade and his accomplices also traded the claws and other parts of their catch.

Film City is located near Sanjay Gandhi National Park. The fence between the park and the Indian Film Temple has not been completed for financial reasons. Relics of forest that separates the various studios are invaded by food waste abandoned by the film crews and the park's animals are attracted to this wild dump. For leopards, this is an opportunity to eat stray dogs attracted by garbage.

The headless body of the deer was 20m from a studio. Forest services say that the cries of a trapped deer and the smell of decomposition could not escape the technicians and actors.

The studios are rented 7 days a week. The leopard died 15-20 days ago, the deer died 20-30 days ago. The management of Film City is under pressure. Under penalty of a daily fine of 25,000 rupees (350 US\$), it must ensure that food waste is collected and disposed of within 15 days.<sup>89</sup>



**January 14, 2019**

**Amravati, Amravati District, Maharashtra State, India**

Seizure of 3 canines, a molar, 9 claws and bones of tiger, of python oil (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), of monitor lizard's fat (genus *Varanus*, Appendix I or II), of a peacock's foot, of pangolin scales and 11 porcupine quills (*Hystricidae* family). Five arrests. Two of the Chikhaldara villagers worked on an interim basis for the forestry services.<sup>91</sup>

**January 25, 2019**

**Dhanmandi, Udaipur District, Rajasthan State, India**

Seized in pooja shops (rites of veneration and invocation of Hindu deities) of pangolin scales, hemipenes of monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) and a so-called jackal horn called "siyar singhi". According to rumors spread by Internet sites, this frontal "bone" of the jackal, if covered with a few hairs, could treat hyperactivity, autism, bulimia, addiction to narcotics, on the condition that it is "activated" by ceremonies organized and billed by magicians. If it is not "activated" the bone can, however, arrange to win lawsuits, restore health and marital ties and attract wealth provided it is kept in a safe. Each specialty store says it is the only one selling authentic "siyar singhi".<sup>92</sup>



**INDONESIA**

**November 17, 2018**

**Batam, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia. In Front of Malaysia.**

Smuggling operation thwarted: several birds (order Psittaciformes), including 7 cockatoos, and 51 marine turtles destined for Malaysia on a fishing boat. Two arrests. The birds were in a sorry state when the police arrived at the wharf.<sup>93</sup>

**January 8, 2019**

**Paluh Manan, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia**



Arrest of Arbain, alias Bain, and seizure of 3 crested hawk-eagles (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II), 3 Bengal leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 3 Javan lutungs (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II) were seized. Three golden langurs (*Trachypithecus geei*, Appendix I) had already been seized at his home.<sup>94</sup>



**January 4, 2019**

**Chelima, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh State, India**

Is chemical urea poachers' new weapon? It is water soluble, colorless and odorless. In September 2018, it is suspected of having caused the death of a 3-year-old tigress whose body was found floating adrift in a canal near Mittapalle. Five months later, a group of 3 men carrying a urea canister and axes was intercepted at night by a patrol of forestry officers. They were about to enter the Nallamala protected area. According to the investigators' initial hypotheses, they were about to pour the poison into one or more water points where tigers and other wild animals come to drink. According to the FAO, one of the antidotes to urea poisoning is the oral administration of a water and alcohol vinegar solution. This recipe applies exclusively to ruminants such as deer and buffalo.<sup>90</sup>



## IRAN

**Early October 2018**

### Iran

It is forbidden to possess wild animals and to display them in public. Only zoos and other similar establishments are authorized to do so. The maximum fine is 800 million rials (approximately 20,000 US\$) and the maximum prison sentence is 3 years.

The ban also covers birds, like falcons and gray parrots.<sup>95</sup>



**October 30, 2018**

### Firuzkuh, Tehran Province, Iran

Arrest of a poacher. The tally in his little black book: 4 urials (*Ovis aries*, Appendix I or II), a wild goat (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan), a gazelle (genus *Gazella*) and a sheep.<sup>96</sup>



## JORDAN

**December 2018**

### Jordan

2018 report (as of December 1) provided by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). Seizure at the entry of the kingdom of 700 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), 21 falcons, 4 monkeys and 400 birds.<sup>97</sup>

## MYANMAR

**October 3, 2018**

### Naypyitaw, Myanmar

Destruction by fire of 277 elephant tusks and tusks sections, 5 elephant bones, 222 tiger and other feline bones, 45 kg of pangolin scales, 128 turtle shells, 1,544 horns and 45 wild animal skins in the presence of the Natural Resources Minister and the Home Affairs Minister. The total was estimated at over 1.3 million US\$.<sup>98</sup>



**January 2019**

### Rangoon (Yangon), Myanmar

Recent opening of the Lizzo and Mammo café where it is possible to play with and cuddle exotic animals. Nearly 20 species have been imported from Thailand under uncertain conditions, including pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), fennec foxes (*Vulpes zerda*, Appendix II), turtles, macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) and geckos (*Geckonidae* family). It is possible to "interact" with the animals, which are confined in glass terrariums and taken out at the request of customers in exchange for 3 US\$.<sup>99</sup>



## PAKISTAN

**January 25, 2019**

### Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan

Theft of 1,200 kg of dried pangolin and turtle meat from the cold room of the province's wildlife services. The meat came from a seizure. It was considered evidence. The estimated value is 2 million rupees (28,050 US\$). Police suspect internal staff. The security guard's testimony is indecisive. He was taken hostage and tied up during the robbery. He may be the victim of intimidation.<sup>100</sup>



## THAILAND

**October 4, 2018**

### **Bang Na District, Bangkok, Thailand**

The Hawks, the elite unit within the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Conservation (DNP), raided the facilities of a company called Phra Khanong Food and Beverage Co., Ltd. They discovered a small menagerie that contained 9 protected species, some feathered, others furry, scaled or quilled. A total of 18 animals, including fresh water turtles, various birds, a porcupine and 2 albino monkeys, worth an estimated total of 176,000 bahts (5,430 US\$). The company owner, Surachai Sutthisarn (33 years old), could not produce any legal documents. He has been charged.<sup>101</sup>



## VIET NAM

**October 24, 2018**

### **Nghe An Province, Viet Nam**

Luong Van Keo (32 years old) was arrested this morning with 24 turtles and 5 pangolins, one of which was dead. They are estimated to be worth 200 million dong (8600 US\$). The survivors have been sent to Pu Mat National Park, and the trafficker risks up to 7 years in prison.<sup>102</sup>



**November 2, 2018**

### **Nội Bài International Airport, Hanoi, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 47 kg of pangolin scales and 61.3 kg of shark fins in 2 parcels coming from Nigeria.<sup>103</sup>



**November 2 and December 20, 2018**

### **Municipality of Hai Phong, Viet Nam**

Shut down of a multi species traffic coming from Cameroon. The harbor customs officers became curious about the activities of a company called Dong Phuong Investment Trading Co, Ltd. On October 5, 10 and 17, the company imported 3 containers of tropical



wood (rosewood and doussie) cut into boards and square-edged. First, on November 2, they discovered 528 kg of pangolin scales, 129 lions' teeth, 93 feline claws and 3 leopard skins. On December 20, a second raid revealed 28 elephant tails weighing a total of 3 kg. The company manager, Nguyen Quang Loi (35 years old), is on the run.<sup>104</sup>



## EUROPE

## SPAIN

### **OPERATION NOWEB**

**Late November 2018**

### **Alicante Province, Valencian Community, Spain**

Seizure of 18 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), one Horsfield's tortoise (*Testudo horsfieldii*, Appendix II), 7 gray parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) and 2 African elephant tusks, all up for sale on Internet. The Guardia Civil regrets that animals for sale on the Internet suffer from poor everyday care and a lack of veterinary care. They are not screened for serious illnesses, and long-distance transport often causes additional suffering. It is not unusual for the animals sold either legally or illegally to be dead when delivered to the purchasers.<sup>105</sup>



**Early December, 2018**

### **Fontanar, Guadalajara Province, Autonomous Community of Castile-La Mancha, Spain**

Seizure in a logistics warehouse of several boxes containing trophies of protected animals, elephant tusks, fur from gray wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), bovine skulls, a bear (*Ursidae*, Appendix I or II) in carpet and another stuffed. The clandestine collection belongs to one or more members of the Hunt Society.<sup>106</sup>



### **OPERATION ESKAR 18**

**Early December 2018**

### **Biscay Province, Autonomous Community of Basque Country, Spain**

Seizure of 14 stuffed animals and parts of protected animals for sale on the Internet, including one hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I), one caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), one barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) and 4 elephant feet. Fifteen interrogations.<sup>107</sup>





## Mid-December 2018

### Logroño, Autonomous Community of La Rioja, Spain

Seizure of one crocodile (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), one caiman (*Caiman spp.*, Appendix I or II), 2 northern gannets (*Morus bassanus*), all stuffed, and one gazelle's head (genus *Gazella*) in the home of a 72-year-old man.<sup>108</sup>

## FRANCE

### November 4, 2018

#### Saint-Laurent-Blangy, Pas-de-Calais Department, France



"Reptile Day", "the largest terrarium-lovers' show in the North of France." Seizure of 311 specimens being illegally held and sold, including 54 chameleons, in addition to snakes, freshwater turtles, lizards, geckos, amphibians and 40 different species of spiders. The operation was coordinated by the ONCFS, the customs office, the Ministry of the Ecology, the national police and the prefecture.<sup>109</sup>

## ITALY

### October 2018

#### Ancona Province and Pesaro and Urbino Provinces, Marche Region, Italy

- Numana: seizure of a chameleon (family *Chamaeleonidae*) living in a souvenir shop.
- Filottrano: seizure in a leather goods shop of belts made of crocodile leather (family *Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II).
- Ancona: seizure of 14 Hermann's turtles (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II).
- Mondolfo: seizure of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*) and serins (*Serinus serinus*) confiscated from a breeder.
- San Costanzo: seizure of 2 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II).
- Fabriano: a stuffed wildcat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II) found in a school courtyard.<sup>110</sup>

### OPERATION GIACINTO December 6, 2018

#### Oleggio, Piedmont Region, Italy

Raid at the Suno family villa. The father is a town councilor; the son is the main suspect. Agents found 145 parrots (40 of which were CITES Appendix I), a coral branch of the order Scleractinia and two 50-cm elephant tusks. There were 2 hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I), 2 red-fronted macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*, Appendix I), 2 blue-headed macaws (*Primolius couloni*, Appendix I), 2 citron-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea citrinocristata*, Appendix I), amazon parrots (*Amazona spp.*, Appendix I or II) and gray parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I), none of which had regulatory certificates to prove their legal origin. They were all placed temporarily with an authorized breeder or sent to a veterinarian for care. Works of art and weapons were also seized.<sup>111</sup>



## NETHERLANDS

### OPERATION TOUCAN

#### September to Mid-November 2018 Netherlands and Dutch Caribbean

Seizure of 6 live snakes in a parcel from the United States; 2 stuffed toucans from Uruguay; 7 kg of ivory at a fair in Utrecht; 2 monkeys being used as pets; coral on tourists at the airport in Bonaire (Dutch Caribbean); creams made in South Korea with protected species of aloe; tropical wood and 75,000 cacti.<sup>112</sup>

## PORTUGAL

### October 30, 2018

#### Portugal

Parliament adopted a law which, effective in 2024, bans the use of wild animals, including lions, primates, tigers, elephants, camels and zebras, in circuses. 1100 animals will be concerned. Portugal has thus aligned itself with 39 pioneer countries (27 of which totally ban the presence of animals in circuses, whether they be wild or not: Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia and Sweden; 13 of which have a partial ban: Germany, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Spain, the United States of America, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Slovakia, Taiwan). According to André Silva, an elected representative from PAN (Partido Person-Animal-Nature), "Parliament realized that larger cages, stricter rules and more frequent inspections were not the solution to the problem of those animals reduced to playing the part of simple marionettes."<sup>113</sup>

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Early October 2018

#### London, United Kingdom

A gold mine magnate resigned from the board of directors of the NGO Panthera which is devoted to protecting felines (see "On the Trail" n°17 p.63 and n°18 p.58). Photos of Mark Bristow posing on a dead hippopotamus, standing above a tusker lying in the savanna, behind a zebra whose eyes are still open and sitting next to a dead leopard were published in the Daily Mail. Mark Bristow, a South African national is CEO of RandGold, a mining company worth 6 billion US\$.<sup>114</sup>



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## RUSSIA

**December 27, 2018**

### Russia

A new law has outlawed exhibiting wild animals on the streets, in bars and in restaurants. The rules defining the detention conditions for wild animals in traveling circuses are going to be reinforced. All animals held in noncompliant conditions will be seized. It is now illegal to have them in apartments or country homes.

A few months ago, 2 bears escaped from a café and caused panic in the oblast of Iaroslavl. One of the 2 bears was killed by the police. Abandoned camels, ostriches and other exotic animals often end up wandering around the outskirts of cities, or through the countryside.<sup>115</sup>

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**October 23, 2018**

#### Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia

Following 2 interceptions by the Australian Border Force (ABF) of postal parcels bound for the United States of America containing a red-tailed black cockatoo skull (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*, Appendix II), a king colobus monkey skull (*Colobus polykomos*, Appendix II), a skull of a straw-necked ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*) and a skull of an olive baboon (*Papio anubis*, Appendix II), a search was conducted at the home of a 34-year-old male. Officers from ABF, the police and the Territory's national parks discovered a macabre collection of skulls, skeletons, vertebrae and bones of ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I), wedge-tailed eagles (*Aquila audax*, Appendix II), crocodiles (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), hornbills (Bucerotidae family, 27 species in Appendix I or II), kangaroos (Macropodidae family), chipmunks (Sciuridae family), wombats (Vombatidae family), bearded dragons (genus *Pogona*), reptiles, dogs, fish, goats, ducks and chickens. The wildlife undertaker was released on bail.<sup>116</sup>

## Donkeys

The African wild ass *Equus africanus* is listed under CITES Appendix I. The domesticated form *Equus asinus* was excluded from this listing. The Indian wild ass *Equus hemionus khur* and the Mongolian wild ass *Equus hemionus hemionus* are listed under CITES Appendix I. The kiang *Equus kiang* and the Asian wild ass *Equus hemionus* are listed under CITES Appendix II.

## AFRICA

### EGYPT

**December 12, 2018**

#### Shubra El Kheima, Qalyubia Governorate, Egypt

Five dead donkeys were found in cold storage. Like in Sub-Saharan Africa, exporting and smuggling donkey skins to China is threatening the domestic livestock. At the current rate, domestic donkeys could disappear within twenty years. The price of donkeys is rising. A tough blow for farmers. See "On the Trail" n°16 p. 111, n°17 p. 125.<sup>1</sup>

### NIGERIA

**Early December 2018**

#### Nigeria

Donkey Skin Processors, Marketers and Exporters Association of Nigeria (DSPMEAN) does not appreciate the draft law banning the slaughtering and exporting of donkeys or their carcasses. According to DSPMEAN, illegal trade represents several million US dollars and Nigeria, instead of banning the export of donkeys, should regulate it. Several neighboring countries, such as Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali, have banned the export of donkeys and donkey byproducts. As a result, the Nigerian livestock has been plundered. In Nigeria, the price of donkeys has also skyrocketed. See "On the Trail" n°15 p.119.<sup>2</sup>

## AMERICA

### BOLIVIA

**Mid-October 2018**

#### La Paz, La Paz Department, Bolivia

Seizure of 500 kg of donkey meat on a market stall in the streets of La Paz. Two sellers were interrogated. They claim that they did not know that selling donkey meat was against the law.<sup>3</sup>

## BRAZIL

**October 2018**

### Brazil

The Itapetinga “cemetery-slaughterhouse,” where thousands of donkeys have been slaughtered and prepared for export, is closed. The horse-dealers take advantage of a law that authorizes the confiscation of any stray animal, whether it be wild or domestic. Nearly one hundred donkey are said to be impounded every day, and many die during transportation or arrive injured.<sup>4</sup>



## ASIA

## IRAN

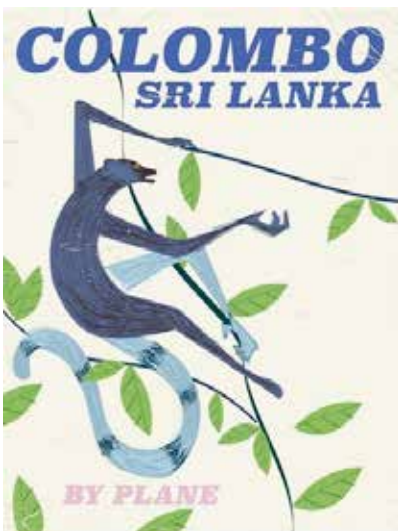
**Early October 2018**

### Kavir National Park, Semnan Province, Iran

Iranian onagers (*Equus hemionus onager*) were transferred from the Khar Turan National Park to reinforce the population at the Kavir National Park (400 km). The operation was a partial failure, since 5 out of 10 onagers died, probably because of poor transportation conditions.<sup>5</sup>



*Equus hemionus onager*



The eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES was to be held from 23 May to 3 June 2019 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, a crucial meeting for giraffes, sea cucumbers, elephants, geckos tokay, Indian star turtles, padauk and afroomsia, among other animal and plant species, when suddenly on 21 April attacks created terror in the capital of Sri Lanka, in Negombo and Batticaloa.

Although the conference soon turned out to be impossible on the scheduled dates, Robin des Bois had long hoped that it could be held in the following months. It was finally decided to convene it in Geneva, Switzerland, from 17 to 28 August 2019.

Robin des Bois expresses its solidarity with all those who wish peace and harmony in Sri Lanka and hopes that the 19<sup>th</sup> plenary session of CITES will finally be held in this hospitable country.

## MAIN SOURCES

Sources are available on request by email to [contact@robindesbois.org](mailto:contact@robindesbois.org) indicating the "On the Trail" issue number, section and reference of the event. For instance, for the last event of "On the Trail" n°23 : chapter Donkeys, Iran, reference 5.

**Robin des Bois especially thanks the Species Survival Network and the NGO Save the Elephants.**

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To be published on October 9, 2019

