



Defenders of Wildlife

LATINO NEWSLETTER

Defenders of Wildlife is a conservation organization committed to protecting endangered species. International conservation policy, especially in Latin America, is an important part of our work. This newsletter is a roundup of news items, resources and other information relevant to this vital region.



Photo by: Jeffrey Armstrong

In this Issue:

Media Articles... 2

Reports... 6

Important Dates... 7

Wildlife trafficking... 8

Resources... 9

Media Articles

Bolivia

Fang trafficking to China is putting Bolivia's jaguars in jeopardy

January 26, 2018

<https://news.mongabay.com/2018/01/fang-trafficking-to-china-is-putting-bolivias-jaguars-in-jeopardy/>

Between 2013 and 2016, 380 jaguar canines were seized by Bolivian authorities, which correlates to 95 jaguars killed. Asian demand for tiger parts, such as claws and fangs, is now substituted by jaguar parts. Until 2014, the trafficking of jaguar fangs was a silent phenomenon in the communities of Santa Cruz, Beni, La Paz, and Pando, close to jungles and parks where the animals live. Jaguars are now being pursued by networks of Chinese traffickers, in coordination with locals, who kill the animals and take its fangs, testicles and claws. Jaguar fangs are mainly wanted for aesthetics. In China and other Asian countries, people wear fang necklaces as a symbol of status and power.



Photo by: Barry Draper

China

Chinese appetite for fish maw drives "panda of the sea" to the brink of extinction, and fuels illegal trade from Mexico to China

August 8, 2018

<https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/article/2158637/chinese-appetite-fish-maw-drives-panda-sea-brink-extinction-and-fuels>

A group of researchers from a Wildlife crime group digs deep into the illegal trade in Hong Kong and other Asian ports that sell maw of the endangered totoaba fish. This trade has doomed the vaquita, world's smallest porpoise, to almost inevitable extinction. Sold as fish maw, the swim bladder of the totoaba – a gas-filled organ that helps control the fish's buoyancy – is prized for its supposed medicinal qualities, and worth more than gold on the black market. totoaba fish caught using illegal vertical gillnets which also trap the vaquita. Hong Kong is an epicenter of that trade.

China

Guangxi father and son smuggling endangered fish maw are arrested

August 8, 2018

https://www.jqknews.com/news/53975The_amount_involved_in_the_case_is_180_million_Guangxi_father_and_son_smuggling_endangered_fish_maw_are_arrested.html

After review from Chinese authority, from April 1, 2018 to June 13th 2018, criminal suspects Li Mourui and Li Mouru smuggled 434 pieces of fish maw, correlating to about 80 kilograms. These products were identified as parts of the totoaba fish found in the Gulf of California. In addition, there is evidence that two other suspects were involved in the smuggling of 2,621 pieces of

fish bladder, equivalent to 21 million dollars.

Guatemala

La falta de control entre Guatemala y Belice beneficia a los traficantes de especies silvestres

August 15, 2018

https://es.mongabay.com/2018/08/traficantes-especies-silvestres-guatemala-belice/?utm_source=Latam&utm_campaign=c637a42246EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_08_17_05_00&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e3bbd0521d-c637a42246-70769631

Guatemala's environmental general attorney states that there are "criminal structures involving peasants and people of Asian origin between Guatemala and Belize". These people are participating in the illegal extraction of natural resources as well as trafficking resources between countries. Scarlet macaws and parakeets are just some of the many species trafficked through the border. This problem has become so extreme that concerned citizens are sleeping under trees to protect macaw nests from poachers and wildlife traffickers.

India

Sea shell souvenirs are killing protected marine life

July 16, 2018

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2018/07/wildlife-watch-seashells-illegal-trade-handicrafts/>

The seashell trade industry is not that well known, but the massive industry devastates marine life worldwide. More than 90 percent of shell products seized by the Fish and Wildlife Service between 2005-2014 were sourced from the wild, and nearly 99 percent were intended for commercial purposes. In India, the Wildlife

Protection Act aims to safeguard a handful of increasingly rare mollusk species, such as the scorpion conch and the trapezium horse conch. Due to lack of enforcement shells are sold openly on beaches to consumers and artisans, while others are exported across the globe.

Mexico

Court grants ban of fish imports from Mexico caught with nets that hurt endangered porpoise

July 26, 2018

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/398995-court-grants-ban-of-fish-imports-from-mexico-caught-with-nets-that>

A trade court Thursday ordered the Trump administration to implement a "ban on seafood imports from Mexico caught with a method tied to harming an endangered porpoise species". The United States Court of International Trade ruled that the government must ban Mexican imports of sea food caught using gillnets. According to data compiled by the National Marine Fisheries Service under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. imported more than \$55 million worth of seafood from Mexico in 2017.



Phot by: Krista Schlyer

Mexico

La Profepa asegura buches de totoaba en el aeropuerto de la CDMX

August 8, 2018

<https://www.publimetro.com.mx/mx/noticias/2018/08/08/la-profepa-asegura-buches-de-totoaba-en-el-aeropuerto-de-la-cdmx.html>

16 packages containing totoaba bladders were seized in the international airport in Ciudad de Mexico. The final destination for these packages was New York City. The total weight of the packages was of 8.1 kilograms, mostly containing dried totoaba bladders.

Mexico

Vaquita: Eal's director puts heat on the Mexican government and Chinese traffickers

May 5, 2018

<https://elephantleague.org/andrea-crosta-vaquita-televisa/>

Elephant Action League's director Andrea Crosta stated on TV the role of Chinese traffickers who are involved in the illegal trade of the totoaba fish, and the extinction of the vaquita porpoise, the world's most endangered marine mammal. In April, 800 swim bladders were seized at the Mexico City airport for a total value of 16 million dollars on the Chinese black market. Andrea Crosta is among the key protagonist in the upcoming documentary "Sea of Ghosts" featuring Leonardo DiCaprio.

Mexico

Mariposas monarca y promesas demagógicas de Donald Trump

June 16, 2018

<http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/omar-vidal/nacion/mariposas-monarca-y-promesas-demagógicas-de-donald-trump>

Every winter, monarch butterflies migrate from Canada and the United States down to Michoacán, Mexico. This is considered to be the second largest insect migration in the world. Nonetheless, migration routes are constantly compromised by unsustainable agriculture practices and deforestation in the U.S which threatens the migration of millions of monarchs. Mexican-American conservation initiatives are key for protecting Monarchs migration routes.

Mexico

Strong demand for "little dragons" fuels illegal trade, high prices

May 26, 2018

<https://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/strong-demand-for-pet-lizards-fuels-illegal-trade-high-prices/>

Mexican tree lizards are fetching prices in the thousands of dollars due to strong demand in the global pet market, particularly in Europe, fueling illegal trade and pushing them towards extinction. People living where Mexican tree lizards distribution is concentrated, spend long periods of time attempting to locate and capture the prized species. Prices range from 200 to 2,000 dollars. The Federal Commission prepared a guide that will be distributed to the Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA) so that its inspectors can become better familiarized with the range of *Abronia spp.* lizards and be better able to identify them.

Peru

Tráfico de fauna: más de mil animales y partes disecadas fueron incautados en el Perú

July 18, 2018

https://es.mongabay.com/2018/07/traficod-efauanaperu/?utm_source=Latam&utm_campaign=c5273d8e46EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_07_23_03_29&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e3bbd0521d-c5273d8e46-70769631

Live animals as well as dissected parts of species in danger of extinction, such as the spectacled bear, puma and the giant Titicaca frog, were seized from a market in Lima by police authorities. Over 100 police officials participated in this operation on July 13. Police intervened five different stores in La Victoria district. Two stores focused on selling live frogs while the other three sold dissected animal parts. The store owners were detained and accused of illegal traffic of wildlife species.



Photo by: David Stein

Peru

Imágenes desoladoras: cinco claves para entender el tráfico de fauna en el Perú

July 27, 2018

https://es.mongabay.com/2018/06/trafico-faunacincoclavesperu/?utm_source=Latam&utm_campaign=ba7fbcff79EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_07_02_03_27&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e3bbd0521d-ba7fbcff79-70769631

At least 15 new wildlife traffic routes have been identified in Peru. Birds are the most trafficked group of animals, and their commercial prices range between 15-227 dollars. In Peru, 318 species are known to be illegally traded of which 86 are threatened or critically endangered. In 2017 a total of 10,398 animals were seized. Most trafficked species don't leave Peru, but rather move through the countries internal market.

United States

Inside the effort to save the most endangered marine mammal, the vaquita

June 30, 2018

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/vaquita-porpoise-tracking-the-worlds-most-endangered-marine-mammal/>

Recent scientific reports show that the vaquita population only found in the Gulf of California, has dropped from almost 600 in 1997 to just 30 today. The vaquita is in constant threat from fishermen who illegally place ocean nets that ultimately entangle and kill the vaquitas. As a result, there has been a desperate rush to save the vaquita from extinction by starting a captive breeding program. On day two of the project, researchers captured the first one. But the six-month-old female was just too stressed from the experience and had to be released.

Reports

WWF Informe 2018: Stop Tráfico

https://d80g3k8vowjyp.cloudfront.net/downloads/negocioextincionespana_ok.pdf

Scientific report from WWF aims to analyze the international trade in wildlife species exported from and to Spain. Between 2006-2016 Spain imported 4.5 million species. The majority were reptiles, primarily used for skins in the fashion industry, followed by mammals, birds and amphibians. Moreover, Spain serves as a port of entry for Europe, for species trafficked from Africa and Latin America.



Stolen Wildlife: Why the EU still needs to tackle smuggling nationally protected species

https://www.prowildlife.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Stolen-WildlifeII_webversion.pdf

Traffickers often target species which are not included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and where there is poor regulation of the international trade. However, many of these targeted species are endangered in the wild and do not have strong national regulation in their countries of origin. This study provides a “traffic case study” for several countries around the world, including Mexico, Costa Rica and Brazil. The study focuses on analyzing how social media and the internet serve as a platform for the illegal trade of wildlife species.

ANIMAL TRAFFICKING
German tourist busted at Costa Rica airport smuggling 400 animals is released with no fine
LINDSAY PENNY | SEPTEMBER 20, 2014



Upcoming Meeting and Important Dates

- October 1-5, 2018: 70th Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee
- October 10-11, 2018: London 2018 Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference
- November 12-19, 2018: Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
- December 10-14: Meeting of the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation of migratory sharks
- May 23 – June 3 (2019): CoP 18 Colombo Sri Lanka



Photo by: Chris Hartzell

Wildlife trafficking reporting resources and databases

SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) <http://smartconservationtools.org/>

This tool is a free, open-source data collection tool that allows rangers and community members to report wildlife trafficking incidents and to view the data to make informed wildlife management decisions. SMART has already been implemented in several countries in Central and South America, including Peru, Guatemala, and Colombia. Many government, nonprofit and corporate entities have joined forces to create this tool for combating wildlife trafficking around the world. SMART software has helped rangers and managers report, analyze, and manage field data to target their patrolling and management activities on protected areas. SMART's new extension allows a user to centrally manage data uploaded from multiple sites and syncs changes made from various users of a database. SMART Connect wirelessly communicates field observation data from rangers on patrol to managers and colleagues watching remotely. <https://news.mongabay.com/wildtech/2017/10/smart-and-well-connected-reserve-patrol-data-system-adds-communications-capacity/>

World WISE

The World Wildlife Seizure database (World WISE) was constructed using seizure data provided to the CITES Secretariat by its Parties and to the WCO by its membership. These data were circulated to Member States for verification. This database alone is not sufficient to describe the nature and scope of illicit trafficking in wildlife on a global scale, but it provides key indicators and a potential early warning mechanism. If the database is maintained and supplemented with a broader program of research and assessments, it could provide the international community with the means to better understand and address the wildlife trade market.

http://www.unodc.org/documents/dataandanalysis/wildlife/World_Wildlife_Crime_Report_2016_final.pdf

Wildlife Witness app

Australia's Taronga Zoo and TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, partnered to create this app that allows locals and tourists to report wildlife trafficking from their mobile devices. This app gives the user the opportunity to take a photo of the wildlife trade incident and pin the location of the incident. This important data is sent to TRAFFIC. Wildlife Witness is available on Apple's App store as well as Android's Google Play.

<http://www.wildlifewitness.net/>

Wildlife Alert app

The U.S. Department of Defense and the Wildlife Conservation Society partnered to create this app, which helps the user identify the species from which the suspected trafficked item came. Anyone can follow the easy questions and quick tests to determine if the fur, horns, shells or other trafficked items are from protected or unprotected species. The goal of Wildlife Alert is to protect biodiversity and prevent organized crime syndicates and insurgents from profiting off trafficking protected species.

<https://apps.wcswildlifetrade.org/>

Skylight

Vulcan is developing a system that uses satellite imagery and data-analysis software to help countries spot and catch unlicensed fishing boats. The system is being tested on the Pacific Island of Palau and in the African nation of Gabon. Skylight uses technology to aid enforcement, especially in countries with thousands of miles of coastline to patrol and few resources to do so. The initiative was announced at the Our Oceans Conference in Malta on October 6. Stay tuned for more details about the success of this new anti-wildlife trafficking program.

<http://www.skylight.global/>

USEFUL WEBSITES

Species Survival Network: www.ssn.org

CITES: www.cites.org

Defenders of Wildlife: www.defenders.org

UN Environment Latin America: www.unep.org/regions/latin-america-and-caribbean

UN Environmental Assembly: www.unep.org/environmentassembly

ICCWC: www.unodc.org/unodc/en/wildlife-and-forest-crime/iccwc.html

CONTACT:

Alejandra Goyenechea

Defenders of Wildlife

E-mail: agoyenechea@defenders.org

Tel: +1-202-772-3268

Fax: +1-202-682-1131

www.defenders.org



National Headquarters

1130 17th Street, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20036-4604 | tel 202.682.9400 | fax
202.682.1331

www.defenders.org