

## China's Wildlife Enforcement News Digest (September 2019)

### Domestic

#### Chengdu Customs seized the endangered plant *dendrobium officinale* from an Inbound Flight from Laos



**2019-09-02, Chengdu, Sichuan**—On August 27<sup>th</sup>, customs officers seized 6 bags of suspected *dendrobium officinale* with a gross weight of 0.63 kg from a Chinese passenger's carry-on luggage while inspecting the luggage items of passengers on inbound flights from Vientiane, Laos. It is reported that the dendrobium officinale in genus Orchidaceae, included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix II, is an endangered plant species. [Read more](#)

#### Qingdao Liuting Airport Customs seized more than 800 grams of illegal ivory products

**2019-09-02, Qingdao, Shandong**—on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Qingdao Liuting Airport Customs found a Chinese passenger did not declare 11 pieces of carrying ivory products including statues, folding fans, necklaces, bracelets and others, weighing about 864 grams. At present, the customs have

suspended these ivory products, pending further processing. On the same day, customs officers noticed the image of a passenger's luggage abnormal during the incoming passenger luggage inspection, and then intercepted the passenger for the bag inspection. It was found then one piece of ivory folding fan in the suitcase, an ivory statue wrapped in Kraft paper and one piece of round can. After thorough examination of the contents of the luggage during which passenger's attempt to hide the products in Kraft paper resulted in failure, 4 pieces of ivory bracelet, 1 piece of ivory necklace and 3 pieces of ivory ornaments in the mezzanine at the lever box's bottom were seized.

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#### Kunming Customs seized the smuggling products of endangered animal seahorse, worth more than 100 million yuan



**2019-09-03, Kunming, Yunnan**—On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the Tianbao Customs Anti-Smuggling Branch of Kunming Customs cracked a criminal case of smuggling of endangered animal products, seizing 148.86 kg of 102085 dried seahorses with a case value of 123 million yuan, which is the largest seahorses smuggling cases solved by



Kunming Customs in recent years owing to the largest quantity of items seized and the case value of more than 100 million yuan.

At the beginning of July, Tianbao Customs Anti-Smuggling Branch, through digging into depth according to the clues in the investigation of an ordinary goods smuggling case, found vital clues about the smuggling of Chinese valuable herbal medicines. After thorough investigation, on July 11<sup>th</sup>, Kunming Customs police quickly launched a raid to a pharmaceutical shop in a large-scaled comprehensive wholesale market, seized involved dried seahorses on the spot, and found a large number of smuggling evidence. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, Kunming Customs dispatched more than 30 police officers in Red River County, Hekou County, Jinping County and other places in Yunnan Province, captured Jiang, Fan and other 7 suspects, and cracked down 2 professional smuggling gangs which had rooted in Hekou, Jinping and others borders with Vietnam for a long period. [Read more](#)

### **Guangzhou Customs seized a large number of endangered succulents in the inbound parcel**



**2019-09-04, Guangzhou, Guangdong——**

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, customs officers of the Guangzhou Post Office, which is part of the Guangzhou Customs Department, found two pieces of mail abnormal with the name "TOY" (toy) sent from Italy. Through opening the box for further inspection, it was found that the two parcels of "toys" actually were succulents wrapped in newspapers whose roots are with soil and other cultivation medium. The total number of succulents in the two parcels is 96. After the identification by professional departments, it was confirmed that these succulents contained 55 in the *cactaceae* family and *discocactus* genus, 6 belonging to *ariocarpus* and 2 *Astrophytum asterias*, which are all in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix 1 as protected species listed. [Read more](#)

### **Luohu Customs seized 9 species of endangered coral brought into the country 2019-09-06, Shenzhen, Guangdong——**

On September 4, as identified by the South China Wildlife Species Identification Center, the 9 suspected corals weighing 1.12 kg previously detected in Luohu Customs were coral worms and were endangered species.

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### **Xiamen Customs seized 15 live lizards and the main suspect has been arrested for smuggling**



**2019-09-10, Xiamen, Fujian**——On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, Xiamen Customs post office found 15 live lizards in an mail declared as a "gift" from Taiwan.

During the open-box inspection, the white gauze net bag in the box were shaking violently. Customs officers immediately stopped opening and placed the net bag in a large plastic isolation box. And then 15 live lizards, about 20 cm long, crawled out of the net bag after gently shaking the isolation box. These animals were identified as *Varanus exanthematicus* from Africa, the national secondary priority protection of animals. Because of the low attack awareness and convenience to raise, it is currently the most popular and common breeding of giant lizard species. However, due to their mild temper, indigenous Africans frequent hunting for eating or business purpose makes this species on the verge of extinction and are listed in Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora for protection. On September 5<sup>th</sup>, Xiamen Customs Anti-Smuggling Bureau East Ferry Branch successfully arrested the main suspect in the case.

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**The customs in Nanjing Lukou Airport seized the suspected endangered species, *strombus gigas*, for the first time**



**2019-09-10, Nanjing, Jiangsu**——On the morning of September 10<sup>th</sup>, the luggage of a Chinese male passenger on a flight from Frankfurt to Nanjing showed abnormal when passing the x-ray machine. The customs inspector found that the passenger's suitcase contained "shell" with special shape which initially determined to be an endangered species, *strombus gigas* weighing about 1.309 kg. This is the first time that the port whas seized this kind of suspected endangered species. The case has been handed over to the relevant departments for further processing. [Read more](#)

**20 pieces of smuggled musk were seized at the largest land crossing between China and Mongolia**

**2019-09-16, Erenhot, Inner Mongolia**——On the afternoon of September 7<sup>th</sup>, at the road cargo port of Erenhot point of the Border Control Station of Inner Mongolia, during the entry inspection, the policemen found 10 pounds of frozen lamb in the cab car refrigerator together with the nervous driver,



trying to transfer clothes wrapping prohibited items. The policemen immediately took control of the driver and seized 20 pieces of musk from the garment, with a total net weight of 740 grams. The case has now been referred to the Customs Anti-smuggling Department. [Read more](#)

### **Hangzhou Customs seized 9 pieces of ivory products at the airport**

**2019-09-16, Hangzhou, Zhejiang**——

Recently, through the Hangzhou Customs Technology Center identification, the previous suspected ivory products including the bracelets, necklaces, pendants, cigarette butts and other 9 pieces of handicrafts seized in Xiaoshan Airport, has been confirmed as ivory products, a total weight of 1458.78 grams. At present, the above-mentioned items have been handed over to the Customs Anti-Smuggling Department for further processing. [Read more](#)

### **Shanghai Customs Post Office seized 80 live lizards and the suspects were arrested**

**2019-09-17, Shanghai**——Shanghai

Customs Post Office recently seized 80 live lizards from two inbound mail packages declared as "gifts". The lizards were identified as the American green Iguana, which was listed in Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. This is the first time that Shanghai Customs has seized the species in a postal channel. At present, the suspect has been arrested by the Customs Anti-smuggling Bureau. [Read more](#)

### **Tianjin Customs seizes for the first time that incoming crew members carry ivory products illegally**

**2019-09-18, Tianjin**——Lately, Tianjin Customs seized illegal carrying ivory into the border in ship for the first time. Chinese crew Qu, Jiang were arrested for carrying 12 pieces of undeclared ivory products, including bracelets, cigarette butts, pendants and others, a total of more than 140 grams. Tianjin Customs coast guards, based on clues, carried out a surprise boarding inspection to a cargo moored at the Southern Xinjiang Terminal in Tianjin. Upon examination, suspected ivory products, bracelets, cigarette butts and different styles of pendants were found in the crew room. By the authorities identified, the above-mentioned items are ivory products. At present, the case is under further investigation. [Read more](#)

### **Nearly 900 endangered wood products seized in Tianjin**

**2019-09-18, Tianjin**——At the beginning of September, Xingang Customs belonging to Tianjin Customs seized a batch of sandalwood which were mis-invoiced as cedarwood. The cargo was a batch of wooden furniture and ornaments declared for import by a Beijing company in general trade from India. The declared material is fir, with quantity of 892 pieces, weighing 5196 kg, worth \$5,199. However, by the third-party commodity inspection and identification, the batch of wood is in the family of Delbergia, belonging to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix II products.



The suspects tempted to make profit through the difficulty to distinguish between two species or blindness about the species.

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### **Qingdao Liuting Airport Customs seized 13 pieces of ivory products**

**2019-09-19, Qingdao Shandong**—During the supervision of flights from Osaka to Qingdao in Qingdao Liuting Airport, a Chinese passenger was seized carrying 13 pieces of undeclared ivory products, weighing about 278 grams, which were set on the axis of the scroll. That day, customs officers found a passenger's luggage over the aircraft image shows abnormal in the inspection and intercepted the passenger for bag inspection. Subsequently, seven scrolls wrapped in plastic bags were found in the passenger's suitcase, all decorated with ivory ornaments on both sides except for one scroll. At present, the Customs has withheld the ivory products for further processing.

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### **Lhasa Customs solved a case of smuggling suspected precious animals and their products**

**2019-09-20, Lhasa, Tibet**—Recently, the anti-smuggling department of Lhasa Customs seized suspected precious animals and their products in Plan County, Ali District, which consisted of 1 piece of tiger skin and leopard bone 6.15 kg. [Read more](#)

### **Jiangmen Customs seized endangered *cassis cornuta***

### **2019-09-26, Jiangmen, Guangdong**—

Lately, after the identification of South China Wildlife Species Identification Center, the conch seized in the luggage of an incoming crew in Jiangmen Customs which is under Yangjiang Customs couple days ago is the precious and endangered *cassis cornuta*, a national secondary focus on the protection, a total of 3 pieces with a total weight of 3.69 kg. At present, the case has been referred to the Customs Anti-smuggling Department for further processing. [Read more](#)

### **59 ivory products seized at the Capital Airport Customs**



**2019-09-28, Beijing**—Recently, a series of seized suspected ivory and endangered animal and plant products during the supervision of inbound flights in Beijing Capital Airport. According to information released by Beijing Customs, on September 19 and 20 this year, the Customs of the Capital Airport seized 59 pieces of ivory products, 5 pieces of lion tooth products, and one pack of suspected pangolin scales, with a total of 5.78 kg. [Read more](#)

**A passenger with a live turtle tied to his waist was arrested by the Gongbei**



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## Customs

**2019-09-29, Beihai Guangxi**——On August 26, at about 6 p.m., the woman, Ye, entered the country through the undeclared passage of the Gongbei Port Travel Inspection Hall. During the customs inspection, Ye said she had stomachache and looked abnormal. The officer suspected her and took her to a closed area for further examination, during which Ye admitted that he brought a live turtle on his body, while busy pulling out a raw turtle from his trouser pocket, and then lifted off the upper clothes to reveal the black strap on her abdomen. It was so surprised to find out that Ye's strap even tied four live turtles larger than the palm. After counting, Ye has a total of 5 live turtles. These live turtles varied in size, with a bright yellow stripe on both sides of the forehead, a pale yellow ridge in the center of the back armor, and a brown-black with a bright yellow edge. Because Ye could not provide any certificate, the customs temporarily detained the live turtles which were later sent to the relevant departments for identification. Recently, the South China Wildlife Species Identification Center identified that the above five live turtles are all *Cuora flavomarginata*, not only included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix II of the endangered species, but also included in the national protection of wildlife list. At present, the above-mentioned cases are being further disposed.[Read more](#)



## International

### Indian police arrested poachers with rhino nails and horns

**2019-09-22, India**—Indian police arrested a group of poachers in Biswanath in the middle of this month, seizing 12 rhino nails and one rhino horn. According to officials, this was the first time they have stumbled upon the fact that rhino poaching is not only for rhino horns, but also for rhino's nails. Subsequent investigations and interrogations on arrested poachers have revealed that there is also a demand for rhino nails in the "grey market" of wildlife bodies. Poachers admitted that nails are used to substitute for "scarce" rhino horn for traditional medicines. As a result, nails are used as an alternative whenever the supply of horns becomes scarce.

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**2019-09-13, Kenya**—Three suspects were arrested in Kericho on the charge of illegally selling ivory and rhino worth 16 million Kenyan shillings. Kenya's Wildlife Service (KWS) officials investigated for three months posing as buyers, eventually arresting the suspects and seizing five ivories and a rhino horn. The suspect was arrested while trying to sell wildlife products to KWS officials. Police are still conducting a follow-up investigation.

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### Kenyan police seize ivory, rhino horn



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