

Geoclemys hamiltoni is protected since 01-07-1975 : seizures.



<http://www.traffic.org/home/2014/2/28/bangkok-a-hub-in-recent-tortoise-trafficking-incidents.html>

On 31st January 2014, Thai Customs and wildlife checkpoint officers at Don Mueang International Airport seized 521 tortoises from five unclaimed bags onboard a flight from Chennai, India. Among the tortoises were 440 of the often-smuggled Indian Star Tortoises *Geochelone elegans*, as well as 65 Indian Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii*



Authorities in Thailand display some of the reptiles seized at Don Mueang Airport © Royal Thai Customs



ON the TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling
n°3 / 1st October - 31th December 2013

[http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON THE TRAIL 3.pdf](http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_3.pdf)

ASIA

Seizure of 6 live tortoises and tortoise meat (Testudinidae family)

Nara Canal, Sindh Province, Pakistan

October 1, 2013

The tortoises were easily captured with nets in the Nara canal and lakes with the use of a chemical that could be cyanide in small amounts. According to the gamekeeper of the district, a gang of 15 poachers was involved in hunting tortoises. The gang had been active the area for a long time. 3 men were sentenced to a fine of Rs 20,000 each (about

US\$ 200). Tortoise meat is worth about US\$ 47 per kilo on the Karachi market. The captured tortoises were released back into their ecosystem and the meat was burned. These were most likely black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I).

**Seizure of 335 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) approximately 330 of which were alive
Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, China
October 1, 2013**

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

**Seizure of 72 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*), 6 crowned river turtles (*Hardella thurjii*, Appendix II), one threekeeled land tortoise (*Melanochelys tricarinata*, Appendix II) and one Indian eyed turtle (*Morenia petersi*, Appendix I)
November 1, 2013**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Rajasthan, women of the Kanjar tribe are said to be active in the hunt. Used by local farmers to protect crops from the incursion of nilgai antelopes (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), they would in fact engage in intensive poaching.

In Uttar Pradesh, all species of turtles are traded :

Brahminy river turtle (*Hardella thurjii*, Appendix II),

Indian eyed turtle (*Morenia petersi*, Appendix II),

Indian flapshell turtle (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II),

brown river turtle (*Pangshura smithii*, Appendix II),

Indian black turtle (*Melanochelys trijuga*, Appendix II),

peacock softshell turtle (*Nilssonina hurum*, Appendix I),

Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I),

Indian roofed turtle (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I),

Indian tent turtle (*Pangshura tentoria*, Appendix II),

Indian narrow-headed softshell turtle (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II),

red-crowned roofed turtle (*Batagur Kachuga*, Appendix II),

black pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I),

three-striped roofed turtle (*Batagur dhongoka*, Appendix II).

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

n°2 / 1st July - 30th September 2013

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_2.pdf

ASIA

Seizure of 115 live turtles, including 72 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and 43 Indian narrow-headed softshell turtles (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II)

Tentulberia, West Bengal, India

19th September 2013

They spend most of the time in the sandy beds of rivers and the females lay their eggs in sandbanks.

Seizure of 220 live black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)

Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok, Thailand

September 22, 2013

Each one of them had been wrapped in black adhesive tape. The 3 suitcases were on the baggage carousel near gate 6 in the international airport. No one came to claim them and they had no address tags on them.



Photo by Sutthiwit Chayutvoraken
