THE ILLEGAL PET TRADE IN CANADA AND BEYOND
A Growing Issue of Wildlife Crime

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Issues

• Defining illegal pet trade
• Driving factors and a global reach
• Impacts in Canada and elsewhere
• Who needs to be involved in the solutions?
“Pet”

A domestic or tamed animal kept for companionship or pleasure

Oxford Dictionary

Defining illegal pet trade
Illegal Pet Trade:
The trafficking of live animals, from “exotic locations”, destined to become showpieces in private or public collections.
The Reality of the Illegal Pet Trade

[Video thumbnail]

Defining illegal pet trade

https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsZinc/videos/642463545954315/
Environmental Crime: How Big?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Crime</th>
<th>Annual Loss of Resources 2014 (USD)</th>
<th>Annual Loss of Resources 2016 (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Logging and Trade</td>
<td>$30 - 100 billion</td>
<td>$51 - 152 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing</td>
<td>$11 - 30 billion</td>
<td>$11 - 24 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal extraction and trade in minerals and mining</td>
<td>$12 - 48 billion</td>
<td>$12 - 48 billion</td>
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<td>Illegal trade and dumping of hazardous waste</td>
<td>$10 - 12 billion</td>
<td>$10 - 12 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal trade and poaching of plants and wildlife</td>
<td>$7 - 23 billion</td>
<td>$7 - 23 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$70 - 213 billion</strong></td>
<td><strong>$91 - 259 billion</strong></td>
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</table>

Defining illegal pet trade

### Trafficking: Some Comparisons (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Trafficking</th>
<th>USD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>$344 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>$157 billion</td>
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<td>Counterfeit Crimes</td>
<td>$288 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal Wildlife Trade</td>
<td>$7-23 billion</td>
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<td>Small Arms Trafficking</td>
<td>$1.5-3 billion</td>
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</tbody>
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*Nellemann, The Rise of Environmental Crime, 2016*

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Defining illegal pet trade
Illegal Trade Hides and Thrives in Global Commerce

- Legal trade in wildlife is $300 billion a year
- Speed and complexity of the supply chain – advanced technology, equipment
- Shared transportation routes and providers – false documents/information, smuggling/mixing of illegal and legal wildlife
- Detection and enforcement at borders – priorities and resources

Driving factors
Seizures at the Border: A View from CITES

Figure 6. The number of individual live wild vertebrates (across all taxonomic groups) reported as live seizures during import and export, according to confiscating country, between 2010–2014. Data Source: CITES trade database.

Driving factors
What is Driving the Illegal Pet Trade?

- Consumer demand in multiple markets
  - lucrative business, consumers value rare and exotic species, status
- Poverty
  - enables the recruitment of poachers, smugglers, and “middlemen”
- Weak governance and corruption
- Criminal networks
  - opportunistic and diversified
“Wildlife on Offer”

• Sellers in contact with many potential buyers: cheap and anonymous
• Social media, search engines, e-commerce
• Charismatic species in homes and familiar surroundings
• “Whisperers”, “Saviours”, “Adventurers”; clickbait
• Under the radar and elusive
A Brutal Journey to the Unfamiliar

Impacts
Stolen Primates - Mapping the Trade Chain

Impacts

Source: UNEP/UNESCO Stolen Apes report, BBC
Meanwhile, in Canada...
All Around Us: Animals for Sale

Key results at a glance

- 32% of advertisements found were ivory or ‘suspected ivory’
- 16: the number of countries investigated over a period of six weeks
- 2,509: advertisements for reptiles, including turtles and tortoises, were found - the second highest category after ivory
- 56% of all the wildlife parts and products and live animals in this investigation were found on Chinese websites
- 280: the number of websites investigated
- US$10,708,137: the total cost of all items found
- 33,006: The total number of items found for sale
- 1,192: Advertisements were provided to authorities

Impacts

Wanted – Dead or Alive, Exposing Online Wildlife Trade, IFAW, 2014
Canada: Part of the Problem

Categories: Exotic birds (32%), ivory (25%), bears (16%), cats (8%), snakes (8%), crocodiles (5%)

CITES Appendix 1 online ads: 118

Marketplaces: Kijiji (56%), Craigslist (20%), eBay (17%)
Natural Habitats to Difficult Conditions

Credit: Zoological Society of London

Impacts
Meanwhile, in Canada.....

Cheetah spotted near Creston, BC, late December 2015, Canadian Press
The Parrot Trade

- Since 1980s, 12 mln CITES-listed parrots traded
- Trade trends have changed, US and EU
- Wild-sourced and captive-bred
- African Grey and monk parakeet -- 57% of trade
- New World parrots caught for domestic markets and international trafficking

Impacts

Meanwhile, in Canada.....

World Parrot Refuge in Coombs, B.C., Friday, June, 24, 2016

Montreal SPCA, August 2015, Exotic Bird Seizure

Impacts
Reptile Trade

Wild animals rescued by Ecuador’s Ministry of the Environment
Meanwhile, in Canada...

Rio Apaporis Caiman – CITES Appendix I  
Crotallis Dirissus, Appendix III
Wildlife Crime: Impacts

- Endangering of wildlife populations, their ecosystems, biodiversity
- Impact on sustainable livelihoods and revenue streams to governments
- Linked to corruption and expansion of organized crime
- Erodes security, natural capital and civil society (source)
- Horrific cruelty in capture and transport of wild animals
- Severely compromised lives of animals in new environments
- Ecological, health and safety issues at destination
### Who needs to be involved in the solutions?

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Global</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Local</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illegal</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>CITES ICCWC</td>
<td>Canadian Border Services</td>
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<td>EC Wildlife Enforcement</td>
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<td>Provinces Municipalities</td>
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<td>Pet</td>
<td>Animal Welfare</td>
<td>NGOs Conservationists</td>
<td>Advocates</td>
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<td>Advocates Animal NGOs</td>
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<td>Media</td>
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<td>Humane Societies</td>
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<td>Veterinarians</td>
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<td>Sanctuaries</td>
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<td>Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Transport Internet/E-commerce</td>
<td>Transport E-commerce</td>
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<td>Local businesses</td>
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Every Link in the Trade Chain

- Understanding the root cause - motivations/values of consumers, eliminate incentives
- Integrated approach to combatting wildlife crime, including industry
- Governments need the resources and urgency to enforce laws
- Domestic legislation to address wildlife trafficking
- Online marketplaces – companies need policies to prevent abuse by criminals
- Educate consumers and public about devastating cost of wildlife crime
Changing Minds, Changing the Demand

• Dedicated forums at regional and global levels – governments, social media/e-Commerce companies and NGO partners
• Better collaboration between enforcement agencies and online marketplaces/social media sites re illegal wildlife trade
• Education and awareness – stop the buying, stop the
• “What’s wrong with this picture?” – early warnings, under the radar
• Working together – humane societies, sanctuaries, advocates
• Getting this on the agenda!
A Clear Message

I AM NOT A PET
Help stop the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products.

I AM NOT A RUG
Help stop the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products.
Thank you

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