

Section 1: Wildlife Crimes Overview

Handout A

Essential Questions About Crimes Against Wildlife: Keeping an Investigator Notebook

Name _____ Date _____

Students write responses to all or selected questions in their Investigator Notebooks* and discuss in small groups.

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1. Use the **K-W-L** format to answer the following questions (**K-W-L** stands for: What I **K**now–What I **W**ant to know–What I **L**earned):
 - What do I know about crimes against wildlife? (Put a star by information you are not sure is accurate.)
 - What do I want to know about crimes against wildlife?
 - What did I learn about crimes against wildlife? (Your teacher will tell you when it is time to answer this last question.)
2. Why do people poach (kill animals illegally)? See Handout D, “The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade,” for information on this topic.
3. Why should a person care about crimes against wildlife?
4. Do crimes against wildlife affect the balance of an ecosystem? Justify your answer.
5. Does legal hunting or collecting of animals affect the balance of an ecosystem? Justify your answer.
6. List a variety of crimes against wildlife in a table (column 1: Animal; column 2: Crime against this animal). Is one type of crime more serious than another? Explain.

**Note to the Teacher:* For more information on the notebooks, read “Keeping an Investigator Notebook” on pages xxv–xxvi.



*Handout B*Surrounded by Threats:
Wildlife's Challenge to Survive

Name _____ Date _____

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Animals are fighting for survival in most ecosystems, countries, and bodies of water across the world. Who is their common competitor? Humans.

Pick one or more animals from the list below, as approved by your teacher. Search online or in printed resources for answers to the questions that follow the list. (For online resources, see Handout C, "Agencies and Organizations With a Focus on Wildlife Crime and Endangered Species.") When done, report your findings to your class.

Partial List of Animals Threatened by Human Actions

(Related animals faced by similar threats are grouped together.)

- Alligator, caiman, or crocodile
- Antelope, bushbuck, or other antelope species
- Apes: gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutan, or gibbon
- Bears: black, grizzly, polar, spectacled, sun
- Birds: cockatiel, cockatoos, parrots, macaws
- Butterflies: rainforest species, monarchs
- Cats: jaguar, leopards, lions, ocelot, tigers
- Coral
- Elk, deer
- Elephant: African, Asian
- Fish: bluefin tuna, orange roughy, cod, caviar
- Fish: salmon
- Fish: tropical (coral reef) fish, sea horses
- Frogs
- Hermit crabs
- Insects
- Lizards
- Manatees and dugongs
- Monkeys
- Raptors: eagles, hawks, owls, falcons
- Rattlesnakes
- Rhinoceros
- Seals, sea lions, walruses
- Sea otters
- Sea turtle
- Sharks
- Shellfish
- Songbirds: hummingbirds, tanagers
- Spiders: tarantulas
- Whales

Handout B

**Surrounded by Threats:
Wildlife's Challenge to Survive**

For each animal:

1. What is the species?

2. Where does the animal live?

3. What is its ecosystem home?

4. How is this animal threatened, harmed, or killed by human actions?



Handout C

Agencies and Organizations With a Focus on Wildlife Crime and Endangered Species

Name _____ Date _____

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Government Agencies

National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. www.lab.fws.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior. www.fws.gov

International Monitoring Organizations

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). www.cites.org

TRAFFIC (Wildlife trade monitoring network). www.traffic.org

World Conservation Union. www.iucn.org

World Wildlife Fund TRAFFIC, United Kingdom. www.wwf.org.uk/wildlifetrade/trade.asp

Organizations

African Wildlife Foundation. www.awf.org

Bushmeat Task Force. www.bushmeat.org

Caviar Emptor. www.caviareemptor.org

Conservation International. www.conservation.org

Defenders of Wildlife. www.defenders.org

Humane Society of the United States. www.hwus.org

International Fund for Animal Welfare. www.ifaw.org



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Handout C

Agencies and Organizations With a Focus on Wildlife Crime and Endangered Species

International Gorilla Conservation Program. www.igcp.org

International Primate Protection League. www.ippl.org

Jane Goodall Institute. www.janegoodall.org

Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project. www.mgvp.org

National Wildlife Federation. www.nwf.org

Naturewatch. www.naturewatch.org

Sea Turtle Restoration Project. www.seaturtles.org

Wildlife Conservation Society. www.wcs.org

Wildlife International. www.wildlife-international.org

World Wildlife Fund (Global Environmental Conservation Organization).
www.panda.org

Wildlife Lists, Field Guides, and Interactive Games

Animal Diversity Web. <http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/index.html>

Colorado Division of Wildlife. <http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies>

eNature, National Wildlife Federation. <http://enature.org>

Kids page, Federal Bureau of Investigation. www.fbi.gov/fbikids.htm

Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch Program. www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp

Wildlife Conservation Society's Go Fish Program. www.wcs.org/gofish

World Wildlife Fund (Biodiversity Basics). www.biodiversity911.org (includes games and interactives for learning about wildlife trade and sustainable seafood)

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Handout D

The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade

Name _____ Date _____

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Why Do People Poach Wildlife?

Poachers are people who illegally kill wildlife. Some kill wildlife for the thrill and power of killing and leave the animal bodies in the field. Others kill in order to collect and display trophy parts of animals. Still others kill wildlife to show their anger at wildlife laws, a person, or a situation.

Last, but far from least, a large number of poachers kill for the money. Annual international wildlife trade is a billion-dollar business involving millions of plants and animals. People involved in illegal wildlife trade may kill or capture the animals themselves or hire others to do that job. In some poor countries, wildlife-trade criminals become invisible middlemen by hiring local people to kill the animals. After paying them a small fee, the middlemen turn around and sell the animals or animal parts for large profits. Many are willing to do anything to get and sell their animal merchandise (TRAFFIC/Wildlife trade-monitoring network. www.traffic.org/wildlife/wild2.htm).

Hundreds of millions of animals and plants (tens of thousands of species) are taken from their natural habitats each year to meet the demand. Some

animals are captured for pets or live animal exhibits; others are killed for products such as clothing (fur, leather), jewelry, souvenirs, decorations, trophy parts, and medicines. Some wildlife are considered pests and killed to keep them out of areas inhabited by humans. Recently, the illegal or commercial trade in bushmeat (wildlife killed for food) in parts of Africa has passed habitat loss as the biggest threat to such animals as elephants, gorillas, forest antelope, and crocodiles (Bushmeat Crisis Task Force. www.bushmeat.org/whatis.html).

What Is Legal Wildlife Trade?

Most animals can be legally hunted, captured, and traded by following local, national, or international laws. Special permits are required to trade endangered or threatened wildlife and wildlife in fragile ecosystems. (An "endangered" species is one that is threatened with extinction. A "threatened" species is one that has an uncertain chance of survival—that is, it is likely to become an endangered species.) The common goal of the laws is to keep the number of animals in a species or population high enough to protect the ecosystem's health and to keep the species from going extinct.



Handout D

The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade

Why Do People Engage in Illegal Wildlife Trade?

People begin hunting, capturing, and trading wildlife illegally when

- Buyers can not find the product legally.
- There are more buyers than there are wildlife products available to buy.
- The wildlife is rare and hard to hunt or capture.

Wildlife Trade Fact

Wildlife trade is by no means always a problem and most wildlife trade is legal. However, it has the potential to be very damaging; populations of species on Earth declined by about 40%, on average, between 1970 and 2000—and the second-biggest threat to species survival, after habitat destruction, is wildlife trade. (TRAFFIC/Wildlife trade-monitoring network: www.traffic.org/wildlife/wild2.htm)

What Role Do YOU Play in International Crimes Against Wildlife?

Most of us believe we never directly or intentionally harm animals. Unfortunately, though, simply by living in today's world we may be contributing to wildlife crimes by unknowingly supporting the people who commit them. The key to breaking

support for these illegal activities is increasing public awareness of the types of crimes committed against wildlife, the laws protecting wildlife, and the ways we may be contributing to these crimes.

Are You Breaking Wildlife Protection Laws When You Shop?

Without looking very hard, it's possible to find and purchase either illegal products or illegally obtained live animals in most communities in the United States. When we travel abroad, we may find beautiful unique souvenirs for sale. Ivory carvings, coral jewelry, leather belts and wallets, fur rugs or coats, wall decorations of feathers and shells, or collections of butterflies are tempting gifts.

We also might eat at a restaurant that offers exotic foods like sea turtle soup, shark steaks, songbird eggs or caviar. Markets in some parts of the world sell living and dead primates, antelope, and many other native animals for meat. Bushmeat, meat from wildlife used as food, is often taken illegally and sold for profit. The general term *bushmeat* covers a diverse range of species, including monkeys, porcupines, rats, lions and even elephants. Purchases of any of these items can support crimes against wildlife. In some parts of the world,

*Handout D***The Billion-Dollar Market
of International Wildlife Trade**

bushmeat trade has become a more serious threat to wildlife populations than habitat loss!

Though it may not be illegal to buy these items or food in other countries, it is illegal to bring them into the United States. If customs agents find illegal animals, animal parts or products, they will confiscate them. The person possessing them could be fined or arrested.

How Do Your Purchases Support the Illegal Sales of Wildlife, Wildlife Parts, and Products?

Look around your house, school, and favorite stores and restaurants. You might find an item made from an animal protected by law. Most people never realize they have bought something illegal. Others may say, "It does not matter. It was already dead." or "Someone else would have bought it if I didn't."

The truth is that every purchase of an illegal animal, animal part, or product increases the incentive for sellers to get more. Sellers will always find a way to meet the demand.

Local people are often hired to kill or capture animals for the seller. Your purchase adds to the demand for poachers to take more animals, dead or alive, from their natural habitat.

What Animals, Animal Parts, or Products Are Illegal to Have?

All threatened and endangered animals and plants are protected by international and national laws. In rare instances some of these animals and animal parts are allowed to come into the United States with a special government permit. Is your favorite animal endangered? The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains the Threatened and Endangered Species database System (TESS), listing all animals and plants classified as protected under American and international law. The database is updated daily and may be viewed online at www.fws.gov/Endangered/wildlife.html#Species. The table on the next page is only a sampling of protected animals and some reasons they are killed or captured. Many species of plants are also threatened.

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The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade

<i>Animal</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Products made from these animals</i>
Bears	Polar, black, grizzly	Paws for soup, gall bladders for traditional medicine, claws for jewelry, fur for rugs, wallets, clothes, and decorative items. Mounted trophies.
Birds	All migratory songbirds, raptors (hawks, eagles, owls, falcons), parrots, macaws, cockatoos	Many sold as pets. Feathers used in decorations. Mounted trophies.
Cats	Jaguars, tigers, African lions, leopards, ocelots, margays	Fur rugs, coats, purses, wallets, decorations. Mounted trophies.
Elephants	African and Asian elephants	Tusk ivory carved into trinkets, jewelry, and other decorative products. Feet made into stools and trashcans. Skin made into leather products.
Marine fish and invertebrates	Many species of fish and clams	Live animals for saltwater aquariums, decorations, and meat.
Marine Mammals	Walruses, whales, seals, sea lions, manatees, porpoises, sea otters	Purses, wallets, and clothing made from sealskin and sea otter fur. Scrimshaw (etching) or carvings from walrus ivory, narwhal bone, or whalebone. Mounted trophies.
Reptiles	Sea turtles, crocodiles, alligators, caiman, many lizards and snakes	Many skin products such as hatbands, shoes, belts, and wallets. Eggs and meat of some are eaten as delicacies. Mounted trophies.
Sharks	Great White shark, nurse shark, whale shark	Meat, skin for shoes, teeth for decorations and jewelry.

*Handout D***The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade****What Laws Are Protecting Wildlife?**

Animals are protected by international laws and individual country laws. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) set laws to protect international trade of threatened and endangered species. More than 160 countries participate. In the United States, the Lacey Act makes it illegal to have any wildlife that was taken in violation of state, federal, foreign, or Indian tribal law. Many other laws protect specific groups of animals (see “National and International Wildlife Laws and Agreements” [Handout E] for more information).

Who Is Poaching?

Poaching rings and black market sales can be very profitable. In the United States poachers can be people you regularly see working at businesses, restaurants, hospitals, and schools. Their reasons for hunting illegally vary from making extra money, to showing their anger at wildlife laws, to feeling the thrill of hunting and killing. Worldwide, poaching is a serious ongoing problem that governments are working to control. The demand for ivory enticed poachers to hunt the African elephant despite protective laws. As a result, the elephant population in

Africa was reduced by over 50% between 1977 and 1997, from 1.3 million to 600,000 (Source: de Seve, K. 2001. *The elephants of Africa*. From the television series *Nature*, by Thirteen/WNET: New York. Text available online at www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/elephants/poaching.html.)

Who Is Protecting Our Wildlife?

Wildlife protection spans from national agencies and organizations to the actions of one person. Internationally, the organization TRAFFIC monitors wildlife trade. Nationally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employs wildlife inspectors and agents to uncover illegal wildlife activity. Every state has a department of natural resources with state wildlife officers and managers.

Many nonprofit organizations, such as the International Primate Protection League, work to protect animals and educate the public about wildlife concerns. Many of these organizations rely on individual citizens like you to report illegal activity.

What Can I Do?

You can also help protect wildlife from crimes. If you see any suspicious activity when you are in a natural area, report it to local

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The Billion-Dollar Market of International Wildlife Trade

wildlife officers or police. If you see products being sold that you suspect are made from protected animals, report it. When you shop, find out what the product is made of before buying. Do not buy pets taken from the wild. Follow the suggested buying rule, "If in doubt, do without."

For more information, visit the websites listed in Handout C, "Agencies and Organizations With a Focus on Wildlife Crime and Endangered Species," especially the websites under "International Monitoring Organizations."

How Can You Monitor Your Own Environment?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What types of items have I seen or heard about in my community that might have been made illegally from animal parts?
2. What kinds of animals have I seen or heard about in my community that are sold at pet stores or that people have as pets?
3. How can I help reduce crimes against these animals?

*Handout E*National and International Wildlife
Laws and Agreements

Name _____ Date _____

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Student Overview

For over 100 years, people have protected our wildlife by establishing state, national, and international laws. These protective measures can be credited with bringing many species back from the brink of extinction. Wildlife officers and investigators must understand the laws and be able to recognize when they have been broken. In this activity, students will choose one or more national or international wildlife laws to read about (or research in more depth) and describe to classmates.

Instructions

- Use the **K-W-L** format to answer the following questions in your Investigator Notebooks about laws that protect wildlife. (**K-W-L** stands for: What I **K**now–What I **W**ant to know–What I **L**earned):
 - What do I know about laws that protect wildlife? (Put a star by information you are not sure is accurate.)
 - What do I want to know about laws that protect wildlife?
 - What did I learn about laws that protect wildlife? (Your teacher will tell you when it is time to answer this last question.)
- Use the following forensic links to conduct research on the 11 laws and agreements listed on pages 16–19.
 - Bushmeat Crisis Task Force. www.bushmeat.org
 - CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in Wild Flora and Fauna). www.cites.org
 - Digest of Federal Resource Laws of Interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/indx.html
 - Endangered Species Handbook. www.endangeredspecieshandbook.org/legislation
 - Federal Laws and Related Laws Handbook. New Mexico Center for Wildlife Law. <http://ipl.unm.edu/cwllfedbook/airhunt.html>
 - TRAFFIC (The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network). www.traffic.org

Handout E

National and International Wildlife Laws and Agreements

1. CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is a voluntary international agreement between 169+ international governments. It provides varying amounts of protection to more than 33,000 plant and animal species whose survival is threatened by international trade of the species.

Appendixes I, II, and III to the convention are lists of species given different levels or types of protection from over-exploitation. Appendix I lists about 800 species that are threatened with extinction, and CITES generally prohibits commercial international trade in specimens of these species. However, trade may be allowed under exceptional circumstances, for example, for scientific research. Appendix II lists about 32,500 species that are not necessarily now threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is closely controlled. The species can only be traded with import and export permits. On Appendix III, the approximately 300 species are not threatened by extinction globally, but one country has asked other countries for help in controlling the trade.

2. African Elephant Conservation Act

This act, passed in 1988, helps protect the African elephant by assisting African countries to enforce laws in places where the elephant is native. It also established the African Elephant Conservation Fund. The act prohibits countries from importing raw African elephant ivory or products made from this ivory. The act was successful in stopping the large international elephant ivory market. In 1989, African elephants were listed as endangered (CITES Appendix I; see #1 above), which ended the international legal trade of their ivory.

3. Airborne Hunting Act

This act, a section of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, prohibits harassing, capturing, or killing birds, fish, and other animals from aircraft. Specifically, while flying in an aircraft, you can not shoot or attempt to shoot any bird, fish or other animal; you can not use an aircraft to harass any bird, fish or other animal; and you can not knowingly participate in using an aircraft for any of these purposes.

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National and International Wildlife Laws and Agreements

4. Antarctica Conservation Act

The federal law, enacted in 1978, protects the plants and animals of Antarctica as well as Antarctica's ecosystems that the animals depend on for survival. Certain products cannot be taken onto land or ice shelves or into water in Antarctica. Waste can not be left on ice-free land areas or put in water, and cannot be burned in a way that puts pollutants into the air. All vessels coming to Antarctica must follow the regulations in the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships. All expeditions must be government-approved, and all members of an expedition must know about the environmental protection regulations of this act.

The following activities are only permitted by special permit: disposing of waste that is not approved by the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships; introducing any nonnative species; entering any Antarctic Specially Protected Area; and capturing, transporting, buying, selling, or possessing any native animal or plant.

5. Eagle Protection Act

This act, passed in 1940, protects the bald and golden eagles in the United States. It is illegal to import, export, harm, capture, or bother the eagles. It is prohibited to sell, purchase, or exchange body parts, nests, eggs, or products made from these animals. Permits may be given for scientific research, exhibits, or Native

American spiritual purposes. Violators may be fined from \$100,000 to \$500,000 and be sentenced to up to two years in prison.

6. The Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act of 1978 prohibits bothering, harming, chasing, hunting, capturing, and collecting those species that are listed as endangered or threatened with CITES (see #1 above). It also prohibits selling, transporting, and possessing a listed species illegally taken within the United States (land, fresh water, and ocean). The regulations are applied to living or dead animals, their body parts, and products made from their body parts. Special permits may be given.

When species are listed by CITES as endangered, it has been shown that they are in danger of extinction in their natural habitats. Species classified as threatened could become endangered if current threats to their survival are not controlled. The Endangered Species Act gives additional protection to species that look similar to those listed as endangered or threatened.

Violators of the Endangered Species Act may be fined up to \$50,000 and/or sentenced to one year in prison for crimes involving endangered species and \$25,000 and/or six months in prison for crimes involving threatened species.

Handout E

National and International Wildlife Laws and Agreements

7. Humane and Healthful Transport Regulations

The Humane and Healthful Transport of Wild Mammals and Birds into the United States regulations took effect in 1992 under the Lacey Act (#8 in this list). The purpose is to stop the high death rate and inhumane treatment of live animals being imported into the United States. Almost 350,000 caged birds arrived dead in the United States between 1980 and 1991. These regulations require that birds and other animals transported to this country are in cages with plenty of space and are given adequate food and water. They also require that, during the travel period to the United States, the animals are inspected frequently to ensure their healthy arrival.

8. Lacey Act

Before 1900, European and U.S. fashion featured hats decorated with beautiful bird feathers (plumes). Tens of thousands of birds across the world were killed to supply this demand. The Lacey Act of 1900 was passed to stop this enormously damaging trade of bird parts, as well as the killing and trading of deer and other animals for the meat trade. The act strengthened existing laws by prohibiting transporting, buying, and selling wildlife and wildlife body parts across state lines. Before the act's regulations went into effect, people in one state would kill

the animals illegally and then cross into another state where the animal was not native to legally sell it. The Lacey Act prohibits transporting, buying, selling, importing, and exporting of any wildlife or plants that are obtained illegally.

Amendments to the act in 1981 raised maximum penalties under the act to sentences of up to one year in jail and/or fines of up to \$100,000 for misdemeanors, and five years imprisonment and/or fines up to \$250,000 for felonies. Maximum fines for organizations in violation of the Lacey Act are \$200,000 for misdemeanor violations and \$500,000 for felonies. In addition, vehicles, aircraft, and equipment used in a violation, as well as illegally obtained fish, wildlife, and plants, may be subject to forfeiture. Persons who provide information on violations of the Lacey Act may be eligible for cash rewards.

9. Marine Mammal Protection Act

Before the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed in 1972, millions of dolphins were drowned in nets set for tuna. The act prohibits harassing, hunting, capturing, killing, importing, or exporting marine mammals (sea otter, walrus, polar bear, dugong, whales, sea lions, and seals). Marine mammals are protected in any ocean or sea or on land controlled by the United States. A permit can be granted

Handout E

National and International Wildlife Laws and Agreements

to zoos or scientific research programs for the capture of marine mammals.

Importing and exporting marine mammals is strictly controlled by permit. U.S. ports and harbors cannot import or export any illegally-taken marine mammal; they cannot possess any illegally taken marine mammal, body parts, or products; and they cannot transport, buy, or sell any marine mammal, body parts, or products.

10. Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act prohibits the killing of non-game, native migratory birds to be sold for meat or feather trade. First signed in 1918, it now is an agreement among the United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan, and Russia.

The regulations prohibit killing, harming, capturing, possessing, buying, or selling any migratory bird, its feathers or other body parts,

nests, eggs, or products made from body parts. Migratory bird hunting regulations allow the taking of ducks, geese, doves, woodcock, and some other species during established hunting seasons. Special permits may be granted for birds bred in captivity.

Violators can be fined up to \$500,000 and sentenced to up to two years in prison.

11. Wild Bird Conservation Act

The Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992 restricts the huge business of importing wild birds into the United States for the cage bird trade. This law bans the importation of most wild-caught birds, including wild parrots, hummingbirds, and birds of prey. Special permits may be granted to zoos and captive breeding programs. Bird imports have been dramatically reduced because of enforcement of this act.