

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

September 2020 Report



Highlights

- **2 major traffickers belonging to a key parrot trafficking network in the country arrested with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets.**
- **They were arrested twice because they were illegally released from cell by a Gendarmerie Company Commander following the first arrest and therefore, after LAGA's intervention, had to be rearrested.**
- **One of the traffickers was regularly supplied parrots by the parrot trafficking network and he sold them at a road junction in Yaounde.**
- **The Deputy Director and the Heads of the Legal and Investigation Departments held a meeting with the newly appointed Centre Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss collaborative efforts**
- **They equally held another meeting with the Commander of the Gendarmerie Operational Command Post to discuss wildlife law enforcement issues.**
- **A super volunteer arrived the country from France for a two-month long training and experience sharing visit.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **2 traffickers with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeet.**

2 traffickers were arrested with 9 totally protected birds including 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets. The 2 traffickers were arrested a first time but then had to be rearrested after the Company Commander decided to release the two suspects, which was a decision that completely went against procedure and LAGA stepped in enabling the procedure to continue. The illegal release made it very difficult to arrest the traffickers again as they were hiding and tried to escape during the second operation but was chased and captured. They belong to one of the biggest parrot trafficking network in the country and had one of them regularly sold parrots in tiny little cages at the Vogt Junction in Yaounde for sale, to the view of anyone who passed around there.

Two meetings were held by the Deputy Director and the Heads of the Departments of Investigations and the Centre Regional Delegate for the first meeting and the Commander of the Gendarmerie Operational Command Post for the second meeting that included a wildlife official. The meetings were aimed at discussing issues connected to wildlife law enforcement and parrot trafficking.

Investigations

- **21 investigation missions** were carried out in **5 Regions** out of the 10 Regions of Cameroon including the Centre, East, South, Littoral and West Regions.
- Good information from the Centre Regional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife, led to the arrest of 2 traffickers with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets in 2 separate arrests at Carrefour Vogt and Biteng in Yaounde.
- Good investigation led to the rearrests in Obili and Biteng- Yaounde. of the above-mentioned traffickers who initially benefited from an illegal release and refused to show up for continuation of proceedings.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
21	5	1	2

Operation

An operation carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 2 traffickers.**

30/9/2020 – 2 traffickers arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets.. The first trafficker was arrested selling 2 African grey parrots and 4 Rose-ringed parakeets at a the Vogt Junction in Yaounde and the owner of the parrots and parakeets was arrested one hour later at his residence with one additional African grey parrot and 2 Rose-ringed parakeets. The second trafficker is a major dealer who is part of one of the most important international bird trafficking networks in the country and has spent 3 years evading justice.

They had to be arrested twice because, the Company Commander who had the responsibility of keeping them in custody simple released them following the first arrest and this necessitated rearrests after LAGA intervened. This would prove a very complicated tasks as one of them simply tried to escape and was given chase and arrested in a stream as he dived into it trying to run away.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	2	3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed Parakeets

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **7 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Ebolowa (South), 3 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Foubot (West) and 1 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **14 traffickers behind bars this month**: 5 in East Region, 3 in Littoral Region and 6 in West Region.
- **28 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **26 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **2 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were 1 court ruling this month.
 - **24/09/2020**: The Bertoua Court of First Instance found the accused **NDINGA BABA Stanislas and TOUMAYA Jérémie guilty and sentenced them 3 months imprisonment and to pay 33.500 FCFA each as court charges.**

They were arrested in Bertoua on the 03/06/2020 for the illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks.

Legal Table

No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)	No of Court Judgements	No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence	Prison term (in months)	No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)	No of Appeals lodged	No of Cases Tried in Courts
7	1	2	3	0	0	26

Media

- **17 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, internet and radio including: 8 written press materials (5 in English and 3 in French), 4 internet publications (3 in French and 1 in English), and 5 radio news flashes (3 in French and 2 in English).
- Subjects focused this month on wildlife law enforcement including: the court hearing of a pangolin trafficker arrested with 23kg of pangolin scales in Ebolowa.
- 9 media pieces in French language and 8 in English language making a percentage of 52.9% in French and 47.05% in English.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
17	0	5	8	4

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director, heads of the legal department and the investigations department held a working session with the Centre Regional Delegate, during which they discussed collaborative initiatives to improve on wildlife law enforcement in the area and worked on strategies which would lead to the arrest of the 2 parrot traffickers.
- Before the meeting, the Deputy Director had held an earlier meeting with the newly appointed Delegate to appraise the wildlife law enforcement situation in the region.
- He equally held a meeting with the Research Officer No. 2 at MINFOF on issues connected to the Memorandum of Understanding binding the two parties.
- The Deputy Director accompanied by the heads of investigations and legal departments and a controller from the regional delegation held a meeting with the Commander of the Gendarmerie Operational Command Post to discuss issues pertaining to parrot trafficking and the rearrests of the two parrot traffickers.
- The head of department accompanied by two legal advisers met with the State Counsel at the Yaounde Centre Administratif to discuss strategies on matters forwarded to him. The head of department equally held a meeting with the Bangante State Counsel to discuss a matter pending at this court.
- A legal adviser held a meeting with the Foubot State Counsel while another legal adviser held a meeting with the State Counsel at Bertoua to discuss matters pending at their various courts.
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Management

- Preparations for the reception of a super volunteer from France were carried out and she was comfortably hosted during her first month of a two-month visit to the country.
- The audit report from the auditing firm Moore Stephens was made available to LAGA.

Activism Front

All the activism fostering activities carried out by the LAGA family are online; this could be gotten at the LAGA website

– <http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Activities under this section have been for some months now, curtailed due to the Covid-19 pandemic that is still very much present.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org .

Link of the month

The online news site Alwihda.info focused this month on the court case against a man arrested with 23 kg of pangolin scales in Ebolowa. The article underlines the fact that pangolin scales trafficking still continues despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Ebolowa-Un-homme-arrete-avec-des-ecailles-de-pangolin_a93336.html

This Month in Pictures



They belong to a major parrot trafficking ring and were apprehended at the various residences, waiting to be transported to the gendarmerie office

African grey parrots are totally protected and found in a tiny cage at the home of one of the parrot traffickers



He tried to escape using a stream near his residence by law enforcement gave chase and caught him