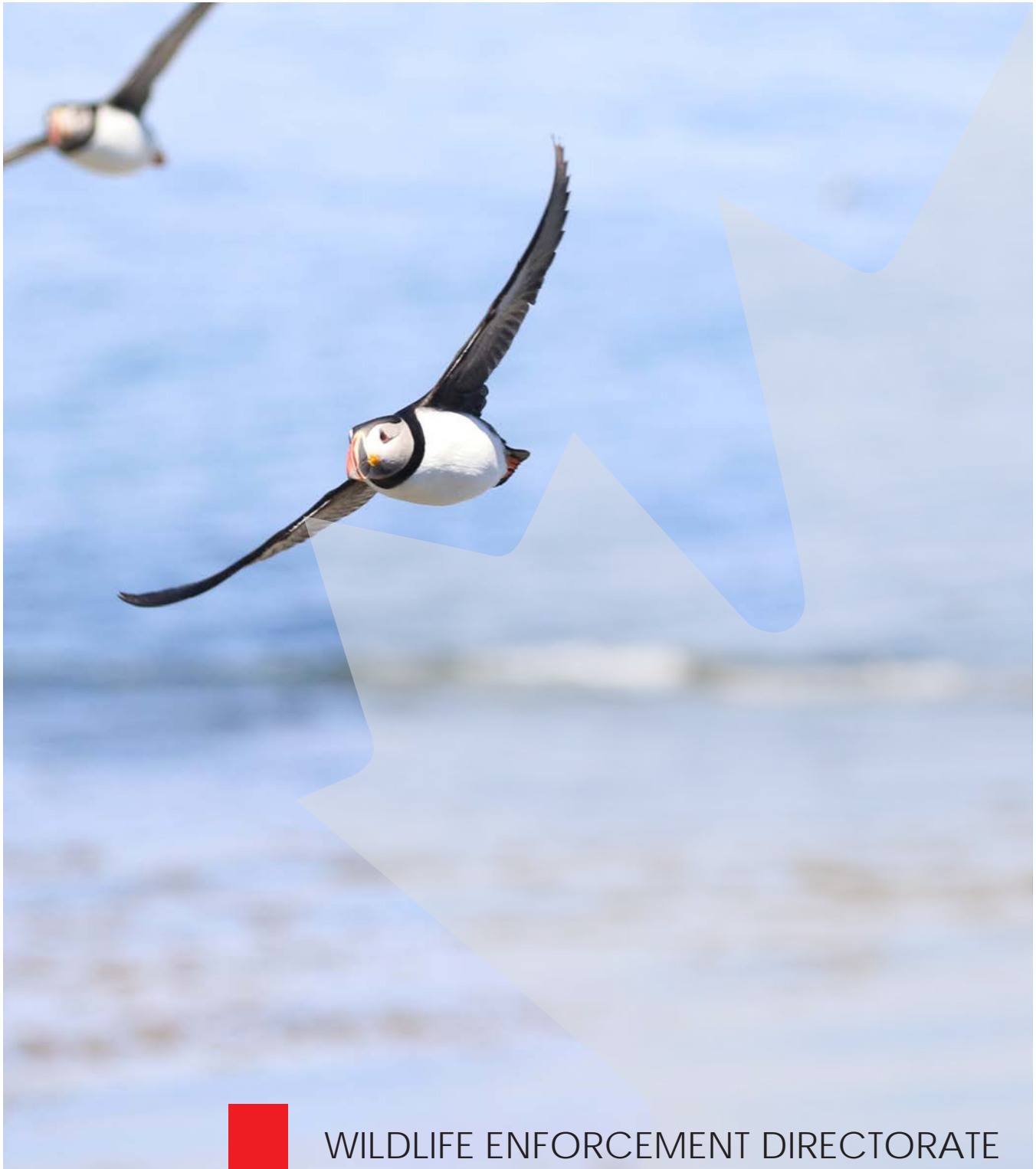




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Canada



WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE
ANNUAL SUMMARY 2016-2017

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Cover photo: Nesting Atlantic Puffins flying together along the shore of l'Île aux Perroquets, the Lower North Shore of Québec.

Photo: Yann Bolduc © Environment and Climate Change Canada

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Wildlife law enforcement is a fascinating field to work in.

Wildlife enforcement officers are peace officers with all of the powers and responsibilities that come with it. They work with cutting edge forensics, electronics, and investigative techniques.

Support staff have to be knowledgeable in putting together and executing enforcement strategies, as well as finding the human, materiel, and financial resources to get the job done – sometimes on a moment's notice.

In a time when every penny counts, we rely on good intelligence and strong planning to identify high-risk areas and we focus our energy on them.

Looking at our accomplishments from 2016-2017, it was our recipe of skill and commitment that led to our success time and again. Our staff prepared for and implemented the prohibitions of the *Emergency Order for the Protection of the Western Chorus Frog* under the *Species at Risk Act* in record time. Over the winter, headquarters staff helped coordinate INTERPOL's *Operation Thunderbird*, a three-week worldwide project involving nearly 50 countries where our regionally-based officers contributed by stopping illegal shipments of shark, 44 pieces of elephant ivory, one polar bear pelt, as well as walrus tusks, among other items. In a stranger story, officers foiled a group of photographers who were playing daredevil games by disturbing bears at Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area (I can't understand why). Meanwhile, we continued our work to stop the illegal destruction of bank swallow nests, a species at risk that has seen its population plummet by 98% in the last 40 years. We trained all our officers on the Métis, their history, and culture, so that we can better work together. This is just a little taste of what we do. There is a lot more to read about before the back cover.

This is the fifth year that the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate (WED) has produced our Annual Summary. It would not be possible without contributions from our great team members nationwide, many of who give a lot of personal time to see it through. In addition, many of the pictures you see in this report were taken by our staff while working to protect this beautiful country we call home.

Enjoy the stories,

Sheldon Jordan

Director General
Wildlife Enforcement Directorate

Sheldon Jordan, Director General at Wildlife Enforcement Directorate speaking at high-level thematic discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day 2017 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York: "youth of the world is essential for ending illicit wildlife trafficking".

Photo: Benjamin Bushell © Environment and Climate Change Canada



"Looking at our accomplishments from 2016-2017, it was our recipe of skill and commitment that led to our success time and again."

- Sheldon Jordan, Director General

Young razorbills and a hiding Atlantic Puffin at l'Île aux Perroquets, the Lower North Shore of Québec.

Photo: Yann Bolduc © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Introduction



Welcome to the 2016-2017 Wildlife Enforcement Directorate Annual Summary

As a directorate of Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) Enforcement Branch (EB), the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate (WED) is responsible for enforcing federal wildlife legislation that protects:

- plant and animal species and their habitat in Canada; and
- foreign species in trade, migratory birds, and some invasive species as per Canada's international commitments.

This report provides a summary of our priorities, operations, and important enforcement actions taken from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

The report is divided into four main sections: 1. Enforcement Highlights; 2. Our People; 3. Our Partners; and 4. Our Resources.

Although the report covers a broad range of our work, it is impossible to include all of our enforcement cases and achievements in one document. To learn more or contact us, we invite you to visit us online at <https://www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=En&n=CB2565FA-1>.

Several of the photographs that appear in this Annual Summary were taken by our staff and selected through an annual photography contest. The winning picture, which appears on the front page, was taken near Île aux Perroquets, the Lower North Shore of Québec, and has been provided courtesy of Officer Yann Bolduc from our Québec City Office.

Wildlife enforcement officers make considerable efforts to ensure that companies and individuals comply with the protection of wild species and their habitats. Unlawful activities can be reported to ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca.



Blanc-Sablon, Québec.

Photo: Anik Thériault © Environment and Climate
Change Canada

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**Enforcing federal
wildlife legislation
is what we do. ”**

Who We Are

We are responsible for enforcing laws that protect and conserve wildlife and its habitat, with the aim of reducing damage and threats to biodiversity for the benefit of Canadians and our global community.

With a presence across the country, our headquarters is located in Gatineau, Québec, and we have offices in Atlantic Region, Québec Region, Ontario Region, Prairie and Northern Region, and Pacific and Yukon Region.

What We Do

Enforcing federal wildlife legislation is what we do. From coast to coast to coast, we work in every province and territory to enforce five federal wildlife-related acts:

- *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)
- *Canada Wildlife Act* (CWA)
- *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* (MBCA)
- *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* (WAPPRITA)
- Provisions of the *Antarctic Environmental Protection Act* (AEPA) concerning wildlife

How We Do It

We have a team of nearly 80 enforcement officers located in regional offices across Canada who have the legal authority and powers to enforce federal conservation laws.

Our officers conduct inspections to verify compliance with legal requirements. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that non-compliance with legislation has occurred, officers may initiate an investigation to gather evidence and take appropriate enforcement measures against an alleged offender. This is sometimes done in collaboration with other provincial, territorial, and federal government departments or international agencies.

Wildlife enforcement officers may take various measures against offenders. These measures include issuing tickets, warnings, and compliance orders. Prosecutions can also be pursued in serious cases of non-compliance. To ensure efficient, fair, and consistent enforcement of legislation, wildlife officers act in accordance with EB's *Compliance and Enforcement Policy for Wildlife Legislation*. You can learn more about this policy online at <https://www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=En&n=39897788-1>.

We are an intelligence-driven enforcement organization, meaning our enforcement operations are informed by our team of criminal intelligence professionals. Our intelligence program uses a suite of products and industry-standard processes to understand and forecast patterns of non-compliance. In a time of tight resources, this allows us to better target our enforcement efforts so that we can stop the worst offenders from harming protected wildlife and its habitat. Our enforcement officers and intelligence team also work hand in hand with support staff, located across the country, who provide critical functions to facilitate our operations and programs.

We work closely with EB's Environmental Enforcement Directorate (EED). EED is responsible for enforcing environmental legislation, including the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* and the pollution prevention provisions of the *Fisheries Act* and *Antarctic Environmental Protection Act*. We often collaborate with EED for program support, training activities, intelligence collection, and joint investigations of habitat and pollution crimes. To learn more about EED, please visit them online at <https://www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=En&n=C3039403-1>.

We also work closely with ECCC's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), as well as the Science and Technology Branch, which provides forensic analysis services to our wildlife officers.

Our Vision, Mission & Values

- **Our Vision** is to be a highly regarded law enforcement agency, respected for its effectiveness in the protection of wildlife and their habitat in Canada and for its contribution on the world stage.

- **Our Mission** is to protect, respect and conserve wildlife and their habitat through the effective enforcement of federal wildlife legislation.

- **Our Values:** Teamwork, Respect, Communication, Professionalism, Accountability, Leadership, Trust, Integrity, Consistency.

- **Our Guiding Principles:**
 1. Achieving maximum deterrence by preventing and stopping crime, and prosecuting offenders.
 2. Demonstrating leadership and vigilance locally, nationally, and globally.
 3. Engaging our partners to ensure our common goals are realized.
 4. Engaging our staff at all levels to develop a national program and recognize the importance of individual contributions to this effort.



Patrol north of Montréal to verify compliance.

Photo: Karine Lefebvre © Environment and
Climate Change Canada



White duvet.

Photo: Josée Michaud © Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Our 2016-2017 Priorities

Our enforcement priorities focus on species and habitats at high conservation risk and/or at high risk for non-compliance.

We take a risk-based and intelligence-driven approach to develop our annual priorities for planned and targeted inspections. This allows us to identify potential offenders that could cause the worst damage and to protect the species at most risk of illegal human activities. In addition, routine and complaints-based inspections continue to remain an important part of our enforcement program.

This year, we launched a new planning tool called the Project and Planning Tracking Tool. This tool allows us to better plan, report, and allocate resources to priority activities. It also enhances our ability to make risk-based decisions and link priorities to outcomes.

Our priorities:

- **Canadian species at high conservation risk and/or at high risk for non-compliance**
- **Protected areas or habitats at high conservation risk and/or at high risk for non-compliance**
- **Foreign species at high conservation risk and/or at high risk for non-compliance**

Our 2016-2017 Accomplishments

- **This year, we conducted 3566 inspections and 223 new investigations under the legislation we enforce.**
- **We took 466 enforcement measures, which included a mix of prosecutions, compliance orders, contraventions, and warnings.**
- **Our investigations led to 152 convictions and 138 new prosecutions.**
- **Our work resulted in a total of \$208,007 in penalties.**
- **Our largest penalty was a \$75,000 fine, which resulted from the illegal smuggling of ivory in Vancouver, British Columbia. You can learn more about this conviction on page 9.**



Enforcement Highlights



We work in every province and territory across the country to enforce Canada's federal wildlife legislation. This section contains a selection of some of our enforcement achievements from the past year.

Smuggling of Illegal Ivory in British Columbia Results in \$75,000 Penalty

February 2017

In October 2014, wildlife officers received a call from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) at Vancouver International Airport after undeclared ivory pendants, bracelets, carvings, chopsticks, and ornaments were found in a passenger's luggage during a secondary inspection. The individual was entering the country on a return trip from China.

Wildlife officer detained the items and sent them for forensic DNA testing. The testing confirmed that the items were made from animal species protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). They included African and Asian elephants, lion, white rhinoceros, and hawksbill turtle.

On February 28, 2017, the individual pleaded guilty to offenses under the WAPPRITA, the Act in Canada that forbids the import, export and interprovincial transportation of these species, unless the specimens are accompanied by the appropriate documents. The individual was fined \$75,000 and prohibited for two years from importing and exporting items made from species listed by CITES. All of the items seized were also forfeited.

Forfeited items made from protected animal species.

Photo: Max McDonald © Environment and Climate Change Canada

\$30,000 in Penalties Issued During Migratory Bird Hunt in Québec

September 2016

Wildlife officers regularly conduct inspections and patrols across Canada during the migratory bird hunting seasons to ensure conservation objectives are met and compliance with the law is achieved. The MBCA regulates human activities that could adversely affect long-term wildlife conservation of migratory bird populations, such as hunting, by identifying which species can be legally harvested, how they can be hunted and when. The primary conservation objective of the MBCA is to ensure healthy populations of migratory birds by overseeing that harvest rates do not exceed reproduction rates. In many cases, a permit must be issued for activities that affect migratory birds.

This year, in Québec Region, wildlife officers checked over 125 hunters during a targeted operation. Officers found 50 hunters to be in violation of the law. In total, the penalties issued for these violations exceeded \$30,000.

Offences included: hunting without a permit, hunting in a place where bait had been deposited, depositing bait at a prohibited time, having an unobstructed firearm, using toxic (lead) shot as ammunition, exceeding bag limits, illegal possession of migratory game birds without a permit, failure to immediately retrieve migratory game birds after they have been killed, crippled or injured, and hunting at night.



Inspections for prohibited bait during the migratory bird hunting season.

Photos: Pascal Gagnon © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Illegal Transport of Polar Bear Skins Leads to Conviction

January 2017

On January 20, 2017, a taxidermy company in Québec and an individual were convicted of transporting Polar Bear skins out of the province without complying with applicable regulations.

The company and the individual were each fined \$5,000 for transporting Polar Bear skins from Québec to another province in contravention of the WAPPRIITA. This conviction came as the result of a 2013 investigation conducted by wildlife officers in partnership with the Québec Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs.

The parties were also found guilty of engaging in trade of unprocessed Polar Bear furs without holding a Fur Trader License, a requirement in Québec under the province's *Act Respecting the Conservation and Development of Wildlife*.

Polar Bears are an important part of the Arctic and sub-Arctic marine ecosystems. In Canada, the species is found in ice-covered regions from Yukon and the Beaufort Sea in the west to Newfoundland and Labrador in the east and from northern Ellesmere Island south to James Bay. Polar Bears are listed as a species of special concern under the SARA and in Appendix II of CITES. Ensuring that Canadian trade requirements are respected is essential to safeguarding the conservation of this species and the sustainable use by Indigenous people, who rely on this species.

BC Reptile Breeder Charged with Smuggling Lizards

October 2016

In October 2015, wildlife officers were notified by CBSA that a reptile breeder in British Columbia had attempted to smuggle seven live *Uromastyx ornata* and *Uromastyx maliensis* lizards across the border, hidden inside his clothing at the Abbotsford-Huntingdon port of entry in British Columbia. These spiny tailed lizards are commercially valuable as pets, food, and traditional medicine. Their trade is regulated internationally to prevent the species from becoming endangered.

Wildlife officers charged the individual under WAPPRIITA for importing the animals without a permit and for making false statements. The officers also took possession of the lizards. After pleading guilty in court, the individual was sentenced to a pay \$6,000 penalty.



"Uros" attempted to be illegally imported into Canada.

© Environment and Climate Change Canada

Man Charged After Attempting to Board Airplane with Bear Gallbladder

November 2016

In late 2014, an individual was stopped by the CBSA while attempting to board a flight from Vancouver International Airport to Vietnam with a bear gallbladder in his suitcase. Wildlife officers were called in to investigate the case.

The individual was charged and pleaded guilty in November 2016 to possessing a bear gallbladder for the purpose of export. This is prohibited under the WAPPRIITA. The individual received a \$2,500 penalty.

The black bear is listed in CITES Appendix II due to enforcement concerns related to the illegal trade in bear parts (primarily gall bladders) of endangered bear species, particularly in Asia.



Bear gallbladder attempted to be illegally exported out of Canada.

© Environment and Climate Change Canada



Polar Bears in the process of naturalization.

Photo: Gervais Dupuis © Environment and Climate
Change Canada

Spotlight on Bank Swallows

The bank swallow is a small migratory bird that breeds in colonies. Bank swallows are protected by the MBCA.

Bank swallows are widespread across Canada. They breed in a variety of natural and artificial sites with vertical banks, including riverbanks, lake and ocean bluffs, aggregate pits, road cuts, and stock piles of soil. Bank swallow populations have declined significantly since the 1980s. In fact, over the last 40 years, Canada has lost 98% of its bank swallow population.

The reason for the bank swallow's population decline is not well understood, but it is thought to be driven by the cumulative effects of several threats, including:

- loss of breeding and foraging habitat,
- destruction of nests during aggregate excavation,
- collision with vehicles,
- widespread pesticide use affecting prey abundance, and
- the impacts of climate change.

To help conserve bank swallow populations, wildlife officers conduct regular inspections of sand pits and construction sites across the country. Additionally, when bank swallow colonies are found in areas where sand pit or construction operations are taking place, wildlife officers notify companies of their legal obligation under the MBCA to protect the species.

Destruction of Bank Swallow Nests in Québec Leads to \$12,000 in Fines

April 2016

Wildlife officers launched an investigation into a company after observing that 40 bank swallow nests had been destroyed in the company's sand pit near Lévis, Québec in 2013. The case was taken to court and in April 2016 the company pleaded guilty to violating the MBCA. They received an \$8,000 fine and the court ordered the company to put significant measures in place at the sand pit to ensure future compliance. A shareholder and an employee were also fined \$3,000 and \$1,000, respectively, and the company was ordered to develop bank swallow habitat in its sand pit for a period of three years.

Company Fined \$15,000 for Destroying Bank Swallow Nests at Quarry

April 2016

A Québec company was fined \$10,000 for violating the MBCA after almost 25 bank swallow nests were destroyed at their work site. The company was also required to pay \$5,000 to promote the proper management, conservation, and protection of migratory birds and their habitat. These penalties came following an investigation by wildlife officers that showed that the nests had been destroyed in the company's sand quarry near Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon, Québec in 2013.

Construction Company Fined for Destroying Bank Swallow Eggs and Nests

February 2017

When wildlife officers conducted an inspection in 2015 of a construction site operated by a company in Leamington, Ontario, they discovered that a large number of bank swallow eggs, nests, and nest shelters had been destroyed. The case was taken to court where the company and its president pleaded guilty to offences under paragraph 6 (A) of the Migratory Birds Regulations (MBR). They were sentenced to pay a fine of \$7,500. In total, the company was found to have destroyed eight bank swallow nests, 25 eggs, and 10 nest shelters.



Bank swallow habitat.

Photo: Simon Duplin © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Hunters Ordered to Pay \$7,000 in Fines for Illegal Hunting of Murres

May 2016

In February 2016, wildlife officers conducted patrols off the coast of Fortune, Newfoundland and Labrador. During an inspection, they apprehended two hunters who were in possession of 58 murres. This number exceeded their total 40 bird daily bag limit. The two individuals also had five Atlantic puffins and a guillemot on board.

The wildlife officers seized the birds from the individuals, along with 2 firearms, ammunition, and, with the cooperation of the RCMP and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, their 6.4 metre boat and its contents, worth an estimated \$25,000.

In May 2016, both individuals pleaded guilty to the offences. They each were ordered to pay a fine of \$3,500 and were prohibited from hunting for a period of two years. The court ordered their boat and all seized equipment to be forfeited.

Murre hunting is a traditional activity and part of the cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. In fact, murre hunting was considered so important to the province that maintaining it was one of the conditions for joining Confederation in 1949.

Intelligence-Driven Enforcement Finds Photographers Harassing Bears

May 2016

In 2015, wildlife officers received a complaint that a group of photographers visiting Québec's Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area (NWA) were allegedly harassing black bears. The photographers were accused of using electronic calls to lure the animals in order to take photographs of them at a close distance.

Using information gathered by intelligence, wildlife officers launched an investigation to determine the identity and patterns of the photographers and to collect evidence.

When officers intercepted the photographers, they found them harassing a mother bear and her cub. Six individuals were issued penalties under the federal Wildlife Area Regulations for harassing wildlife and leaving the marked trails of an NWA.



Photo taken by one of the photographers and posted to their Facebook page.

Yacht Club Convicted of Killing Migratory Birds

July 2016

On July 6, 2016, the owners of a yacht club in Québec pleaded guilty to section 24(3) of the MBR after injuring and killing ring-billed gulls while attempting to scare them away.

The company had installed a series of monofilaments over the marine's breakwater to stop the gulls from landing on anchored boats in the marina and to scare them away. Wildlife officers issued the company a warning to remove the monofilaments, however the owners left them in place. Over a dozen birds were injured or died as a result of the monofilaments.

The company was fined \$2,500 in court.



Monofilaments installed to prevent birds from landing on anchored boats in the marina.

Photo: Pascal Gagnon © Environment and Climate Change Canada



Surviving Reeve's Turtle imported illegally into Canada.

Photo: David Wagener © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Intelligence-Driven Enforcement Results in \$12,500 Conviction for Ivory Smuggling

November 2016

A large-scale joint investigation was launched in December 2013 in partnership with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) after intelligence officers revealed that an Ontario auction house and its director was suspected of violating the WAPPRITA by illegally exporting elephant ivory and python skin.

Based on information provided by intelligence, wildlife officers conducted an investigation. The accused parties were subsequently charged with exporting elephant ivory and python products without the necessary Canadian export permits required under CITES. In court, the company and its director pleaded guilty to the charges and were sentenced to a \$12,500 fine and two years of probation.

During the investigation, the ivory was confirmed to be from several African Forest Elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*), one of which was killed in 2001. Elephant populations in Africa have been under great pressure from poaching and ivory trafficking. Globally, it is estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 animals were poached last year alone.



Elephant ivory attempted to be exported illegally out of Canada.

Photo: Todd Kish © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Illegal Import of Reeve's Turtle Through Mail Results in Fine

August 2016

In August 2016, wildlife officers responded to a call from the international mail facility in Mississauga, Ontario to inspect a package that was suspected to contain live animals.

When the officers opened the package they found three CITES-protected Reeve's Turtle (*Chinemys reevesii*) and food inside. One of the turtles was found alive and two were dead. The officers learned that the parcel had been in transit from China for about eight days. The individual who imported the turtles was issued a fine and was made to forfeit the turtles. Not only are these actions excessively cruel, but they are also illegal under WAPPRITA.

The surviving turtle was cared for until it was assessed to be in good health. It was then permanently relocated to a local reptile keeper.



Surviving Reeve's Turtle imported illegally into Canada.

Photo: David Wagener © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Patrols of Wellers Bay National Wildlife Area Result in Fines

July 2016

Beginning in July 2016, wildlife officers conducted a series of patrols of Wellers Bay National Wildlife Area (NWA) following complaints of individuals trespassing in the area. The NWA is a long, narrow sand spit with three adjacent small islands (Bald, Fox and Baldhead islands) located in northeastern Lake Ontario. A large number of waterfowl use the beaches and shallow marshes within Wellers Bay NWA to rest and feed during migration. The 40-hectare NWA also serves to protect rare wildlife habitat, including open beach, sand dunes, deciduous forest, and wetlands. It is home to species at risk, including Least Bittern, Snapping Turtle, Pugnose Shiner, and Monarch Butterfly. Public access to the site is prohibited due to the sensitive habitats and species. In addition, there is danger posed by unexploded ordnance at this former bombing range.

As a result of the patrols, enforcement officers issued many tickets to individuals, totalling a combined amount of \$2,740. Of the violations, 19 were issued to individuals for entering an NWA or part thereof contrary to a notice, and one ticket was issued for letting a dog run at large in an NWA.

Nature NB Receives \$125,000 from the EDF

October 2016

In October 2016, Nature NB became the recipient of \$125,000 from the Environmental Damages Fund (EDF). The money resulted from the conviction of a company in 2015 that caused the death of 7,500 migratory birds in a 2013 incident.

EDF funding will support a project led by Nature NB to carry out research on bird migration and to help to raise public awareness about the importance of migratory birds in southern New Brunswick and the necessity of coastal habitat for nesting and feeding in migration.

The organization has also committed to work with the Saint John Naturalists' Club to support and advance migratory bird research programs along the Bay of Fundy. The monitoring will involve watching and recording migratory birds and will generate important information to increase the understanding of migratory patterns along the southern New Brunswick coastal migration corridor.

Created in 1995, the EDF is a Government of Canada Specified Purpose Account administered by ECCC. The Fund ensures that court-awarded penalties are used for projects with positive environmental impacts. EDF funds are invested primarily in project activities that relate to the original incident.

Emergency Protection Order for Western Chorus Frog

June 2016

The Western Chorus Frog is a small amphibian that usually breeds in seasonal wetlands located near open habitats or discontinuous forests. A portion of the population, located in southern Ontario and southwestern Québec, known as Great Lakes/St. Lawrence-Canadian Shield population, was assessed as threatened by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada in 2008 and listed under the SARA in 2010.

On June 22, 2016, the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, issued an Emergency Protection Order to protect the Western Chorus Frog and its habitat in the Montérégie region of Québec on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River near Montréal. The area comprises approximately two square kilometres of partially developed privately-owned land in the municipalities of La Prairie, Candiac, and Saint-Philippe. The order came into force on July 8, 2016 and prohibits any activity that would threaten the Western Chorus Frog.

The Western Chorus Frog population has declined sharply in the Montérégie region of Québec in the

last few decades. The greatest loss of habitat has been in La Prairie, where nearly 90% of suitable habitat was lost over the course of about 15 years. Habitat in suburban areas of southwestern Québec is also being destroyed at a rapid pace, putting the population in danger of extirpation by 2030.

Between July and November 2016, wildlife officers conducted dozens of patrols to verify compliance with the Emergency Order. Almost 140 violations of the Order were documented and validated through field visits. Most of the violations involved land encroachment where residents built sheds, gardens, and other installations on protected territory. Some of these buildings are as far as 100 metres inside the Emergency Order boundaries.

Follow-up work continued over the winter of 2017. Along with ECCC's CWS, we have participated in several public meetings with municipal representatives, developers, and citizens whose properties were affected by the Order. Patrols are planned to resume in spring 2017 and continue until the Order is lifted.



Properties that encroach on the land identified by the Emergency Order. The red line indicates the boundary of the Emergency Order area.

Image: Google Maps

Patrol of Lower North Shore Migratory Bird Sanctuaries

April-September 2016

The Lower North Shore of Québec has nine Migratory Bird Sanctuaries consisting of several islands, islets, rocks, and waters surrounding the islands. Most of the sanctuaries on Québec's Lower North Shore were established early last century to protect the nesting sites of various species of colonial seabirds such as the common eider, common murres, Atlantic puffins, and razorbills. The area is one of the richest seabird nesting locations in the North Atlantic and attracts vulnerable species.

Wildlife officers conduct yearly patrols of the Lower North Shore of Québec to stop the illegal collection of eggs and hunting out of season. This year, strategic patrols of Québec's Lower North Shore began in early April 2016 aboard the patrol vessel *HS Lewis*. Inspections were conducted across the Îles Sainte-Marie and Baie-des-Loups Migratory Birds Sanctuaries. During the patrol, a total of 33 inspections were carried out. Of these inspections, eight individuals were found to be hunting migratory birds out of season, which is a violation under the MBCA.

In 2017, wildlife officers also partnered with CWS to put measures in place to reduce the predation risk of migratory birds by red foxes. Red foxes can significantly threaten bird colonies by raiding their nests for food.



Patrol vessel *HS Lewis* approaching a Migratory Bird Sanctuary on the Lower North Shore of Québec.

Photo: Simon Duplin © Environment and Climate Change Canada



Wildlife officers on patrol on the Lower North Shore of Québec.

Photo: Simon Duplin © Environment and Climate Change Canada



Our People

Moisie River after a forest fire in March 2017.
The area is home to Woodland Caribou.

Photo: Yves Raymond © Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Investing in our employees is one of our top priorities. Working out of more than 20 offices across the country, our wildlife officers, intelligence professionals, and program staff carry out our mandate to protect and conserve wildlife and habitats across Canada.

Enforcement Training for New Wildlife Officers

When the Enforcement Branch hires new wildlife officer candidates, they are required to complete extensive training in order to be designated to enforce the law.

There are two courses that wildlife officers take for their designation. The first course is Wildlife Enforcement Standardized Training (WEST), which covers topics that deal specifically with Canadian wildlife legislation and wildlife enforcement operations at ECCC. The second course is Applied Enforcement Training (AET), which covers peace officer enforcement and use of force skills.

This year, we were proud to see 9 wildlife enforcement officers and 3 wildlife intelligence analysts graduate from the training program.

'Wildlife Cops' Featured on CBC's *the fifth estate*

In 2016, we were proud to be the focus of an episode of *the fifth estate*, CBC's investigative news program. The episode, called "Stolen Treasures," aired on April 8, 2016 and showcased our role in combatting the illegal trafficking of protected wildlife. The show provided an inside look at our day to day operations and followed several wildlife officers on inspections.

During the filming of the episode, the show's investigative reporters were given exclusive access to one of our exhibit rooms, where they filmed a guided 360-degree tour of exotic species held in the room. The tour can be viewed at <http://www.cbc.ca/news/multimedia/an-exclusive-look-inside-a-secret-wildlife-crime-exhibit-room-1.3522808>.

American Ginseng Training in Québec

Wild American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) commands a high price, despite it being illegal to harvest. In July and August 2016, three training sessions were organized for wildlife and conservation officers across the Québec Region. In these sessions, officers practiced how to identify wild American ginseng in its natural habitat, how to recognize the signs of poaching, and what tools are commonly used by poachers to harvest ginseng. The training also examined the main threats to the species and what methods may be used to mark the plants to protect them from poaching and to help support prosecution efforts.

For several years, wildlife officers have been monitoring American ginseng on federal lands. American ginseng is listed under the SARA as an endangered species in Canada, in part because of its popular medicinal values and its high demand around the world. Additionally, the plant is extremely slow-growing, taking seven to ten years to reach reproductive maturity. This makes illegal harvesting exceptionally problematic.



American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*).

Photo: Jean-François Dubois © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Our Partners

Qaummaarviit Territorial Park, Nunavut

Photo: Sheldon Jordan © Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Partnering with other law enforcement agencies and intelligence networks is critical to our success. When we work together we can be more effective, sophisticated, responsive, and better equipped to target the worst wildlife offenders.

Information Sessions with Our Partners in Newfoundland and Labrador

In May 2016, several wildlife officers travelled to NunatuKavut and Unimak'ki in Labrador to strengthen partnerships with Indigenous community Guardians and deliver one-day training sessions on the MBCA. The sessions offered information and awareness to enable Guardians to identify MBCA incidents. They also allowed our team to learn more about the communities.

Continued Implementation of the Polar Bear Three-Pronged Approach

Last year, we collaborated with Inuit and First Nations communities, provincial and territorial agencies, and partners at ECCC to pilot an innovative “three-pronged approach” to identify and track legal Polar Bear hides once they enter trade. The approach consists of DNA analysis (genotyping) of muscle tissue, stable isotope analysis of fur samples, and passive integrated transponder or “PIT” tagging. Using the three methods together strengthens Polar Bear identification and facilitates legal trade. This year, we continued to implement the three-pronged approach by providing training to an additional 13 conservation officers from six communities in the Northwest Territories.

Wildlife Officers Take Part in Annual Operation Nunakput

Two of our wildlife officers sailed Great Slave Lake in July 2016 as part of this year's *Operation Nunakput*, an annual marine patrol of the Mackenzie River system, its delta, and the coastal waters of the Beaufort Sea. The purpose of the annual patrol is to maintain and enhance operational readiness in a marine environment, respond to calls for service or complaints, participate in training exercises and scenarios, and conduct community engagement.

Great Slave Lake is the second largest lake in the Northwest Territories and tenth largest lake in the world, measuring 469 kilometres long and 203 kilometres wide. Communities situated on the lake include Yellowknife, Hay River, Hay River Reserve, Behchoko, Fort Resolution, Lutselk'e, Dettah, and N'Dilo.

Wildlife officers participated in this operation along with members of the RCMP, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Canadian Forces, and the Canadian Rangers. In addition to developing partnerships with these agencies, our participation in Operation Nunakput allowed officers to visit local communities, conduct inspections, and gather intelligence.

During the patrol, officers were also called to assist with a search and rescue operation after several boaters were reported missing on Great Slave Lake. Thanks to coordinated efforts, the boaters were found and rescued safely.



Partners working together on a marine patrol.

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Our Role in INTERPOL's *Operation Thunderbird*

From January 30 to February 19, 2017, we participated in and helped to organize *Operation Thunderbird*, a worldwide effort under INTERPOL's Wildlife Crimes Working Group. The project involved police, customs, border agencies, environment, wildlife, and forestry officials from 49 countries and territories, and resulted in a range of seizures.

ECCC contributed to this global effort by:

- Detaining a non-compliant Polar Bear hide and pelts from other species;
- Detaining two walrus tusks;
- Seizing 46 elephant ivory pieces, including two tusks;
- Detaining two wooden statues suspected to be made from controlled species of wood;
- Analyzing DNA samples for several hundred kilograms of shark imports;
- Conducting patrols in protected areas that are at high risk of non-compliance in the winter months;
- Monitoring Canadian species at risk of poaching and illegal commercialization during the winter months, including sea ducks and other species;
- Training and designating five new wildlife officers with full powers, four new wildlife officers with partial designations, and training three new intelligence analysts;
- Making significant progress on several investigations; and
- Opening new intelligence and investigation files.

At a global level, *Operation Thunderbird* resulted in the identification of nearly 900 suspects and the seizure of 1,400 illicit products worth an estimated US \$5.1 million.

We helped organize *Operation Thunderbird* in cooperation with INTERPOL, the World Customs Organisation, the CITES Secretariat, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the UK Border Force.

Our Contribution to CITES CoP17 in Johannesburg

CITES is an international agreement that regulates trade in specific species of wild animals and plants, as well as their respective parts and derivatives. The goal of CITES is to ensure that international trade in plants and animals does not threaten their survival and that legal trade is sustainable. As a Party to CITES, Canada has obligations to ensure that international trade in wild fauna and flora is sustainable. In Canada, the legal obligations deriving from CITES is embedded in the WAPPROITA. Enforcement is an important component of meeting these obligations.

This year, the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) to CITES was held in Johannesburg, South Africa from September 23 to October 5, 2016. The event was attended by well over 2,500 participants from government, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, and more. The Canadian delegation comprised of 12 participants from ECCC, three of which were from WED.

Parties of the CoP meet every three years to assess the implementation of the CITES and review species listings. This year, discussions ranged from strengthening frontline cooperation to combatting transnational organized wildlife and forest crime to cybercrime.

Sheldon Jordan, our Director General and the Chair of the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group, hosted a 3-day meeting on the margins of CoP17 that attracted 80 government representatives from 50 countries and 60 civil society representatives from various academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and companies. The meeting facilitated presentations on five main themes: community engagement, forestry crime, engaging with the transport sector, forensics, and intersessional projects.

In addition, on the margins of CoP17, Canada hosted a first-ever meeting of Arctic nations to discuss wildlife crime threats to northern species.



Canadian delegation at COP17 to CITES in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Photo: David Lee © Environment and Climate Change Canada



Identification and DNA testing of dried shark fin.

Photo: Steven Laing © Environment and Climate
Change Canada



Our Resources



Display case located at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Ontario.

Photo: Lonny Coote © Environment and Climate Change Canada

Our resources are what provides the foundation for our programs and operations. They keep our directorate running smoothly and our employees safe. This is what we did this year to invest in our resources.

WED Provides Animal Specimens to the Canadian Centre for DNA Barcoding

In 2003, a research group led by Dr. Paul Hebert at the University of Guelph proposed a new system of species identification called DNA barcoding, which uses a short DNA sequence to analyze hard-to-identify specimens and allows non-experts to make quick identifications. Subsequently, the International Barcode of Life was established as an international research alliance to develop a comprehensive species database. Responsibility for sequencing 90% of the specimens in the project was given to the Canadian Centre for DNA Barcoding. Information from the Canadian Centre has been used to support several of our investigations, including cases involving elephant ivory, suspected rhino horn, hawksbill sea turtle shell, and tree fern roots.

Recently, the Canadian Centre has begun to develop a new method for identifying DNA from specimens that have been degraded by adverse environmental conditions or by processing, such as tanning of skins or manufacturing of medicines. To assist with this research, we provided 96 specimen samples from seized animal. The samples include skins, leather, ivory, teeth, horns, bones, skulls, gall bladders, penis, claws, feathers, shells, food stuff, liquids, and medicines. We are proud to contribute to this important research.



Photo: Steven Laing © Environment and Climate Change Canada

New Display Case Provides Information on Endangered Species

This year, we added a new display case to the atrium of the Canada Centre for Inland Waters (CCIW) in Burlington, Ontario. The display case contains a variety of items made from species listed under CITES and joins other existing displays in airports across the country to provide information to the public about the importance of wildlife conservation and wildlife laws in Canada.

New System Launched to Manage Enforcement Information

This year, the Enforcement Branch launched a new database system to manage enforcement information. The system is called GAVIA. It is used to store and analyze critical operational and officer safety information and gain insight into the structures, relationships, and compliance histories of our regulated communities. It replaces our previous 20-year-old system.



Display cases located at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Ontario.

Photos: Lonny Coote © Environment and Climate Change Canada



Moving Forward

Conclusion

This year was exciting and busy. Not only did we achieve many successful enforcement outcomes at home, we continued to provide leadership locally, nationally, and globally.

We did this by implementing emergency orders, inspecting goods and species, and carrying out investigations. We made important contributions at CITES CoP17, participated in international operations organized by INTERPOL, and continued to deepen our relationships with organizations across Canada. We worked closely with our partners at the provincial, territorial, and federal levels and with civil society groups – whom without we would not be as effective.

But our work is not done.

Wildlife crime persists in Canada and abroad. We will continue to take a firm stance against wildlife crime by investing in our people, partnerships, and resources, and by leading a strong enforcement program across the country.

In 2017-2018 we plan to:

- Continue to achieve successful enforcement outcomes that protect and conserve wildlife and habitat in Canada.
- Make it easier for wildlife officers to work in the field by rolling out additional mobile office tools.
- Continue to deliver our robust training program, with a special focus on middle managers and administrative staff.
- Deepen priority partnerships with internal and external partners.
- Continue to develop and implement sophisticated planning tools.

We are proud of what we have achieved this year and we look forward to continued success in the year to come. Together, we can protect and conserve wildlife and its habitat in Canada and make important contributions on the world stage.

Mom and Baby.

Photo: B. Knockwood © Environment and
Climate Change Canada

