

# **Learning Objectives: Handling and Management of Confiscated Live Wildlife and Live Wildlife - Crime Scene Investigation**

## **Course For: Wildlife Officers, Law Enforcement, other Frontline Staff**

### **Module 1. How to Secure and Record Evidence during Wildlife Crime/Trade Investigations**

#### **Part 1. Before arriving at the crime scene**

Overview: Part 1 aims to show the complexity of investigating wildlife crimes, with practical solutions to help clearly identify if a wildlife crime is in progress or has taken place. Where to source, what information needs to be addressed (5WH) and how to record it. Legal considerations and preparation of an investigative team and equipment before attending a wildlife crime scene.

#### **Part 2. Arrival at the Crime Scene**

Overview: Part 2 focusses on attending a crime scene – establishing if it is a crime scene, safety precautions, how secure the scene, how to methodically search for, collect and record evidence. How to prepare samples for transportation and storage.

Objective: To provide context to the complexity of the issue of Wildlife Crime/Trade investigations. Provide a clear process to identify, investigate, collect admissible evidence and maintain the chain of evidence, for the prosecution of participants in the wildlife trade network. This module addresses the following key challenges: lack of knowledge and understanding of wide-ranging implications; and improper methods (crime scene investigation and sample collection, taxa identification, handling, storage and transport).

### **Module 2 How to identify species during wildlife crime/trade investigations**

Overview: Species can be challenging to identify – but it is essential to identify them correctly in order to understanding if a crime is or has been being committed. This module methodically explains what information to record, how take photos, how to collect evidence and biological samples for DNA testing for each taxa.

Objective: To ensure animals are correctly identified by providing the tools and knowledge to correctly collect images, data and samples by investigators. Provide further clarity in maintaining a clear chain of evidence to facilitate the prosecution of perpetrators.

### **Module 3. Sample collection for DNA Analysis for Species Identification**

Overview: This module provides an overview of DNA analysis. A list of specialized laboratories is included. A quick reference table is provided to determine how various samples are analysed. This chapter explains the possibilities and limitations of sample analysis – including DNA, stable isotopes and faecal samples.

Objective: To give a base understanding of DNA analysis, advantages of each type of analysis and limitations, to ensure the correct samples are collected for evidence and analysed by a certified laboratory. Samples can provide evidence of provenance (which can further support species identification), length of time in captivity and evidence of malnourishment.

#### **Module 4. Are the animals farmed or collected from the wild?**

Overview: This module provides a guide for evaluating the seller, as well as the facilities and equipment used to transport/house the animals and red flags to look out for. The step by step introduction to examining an animal, including species, age, gender, markings or colourings, current behaviour (is the animal displaying normal behaviour or is there evidence of maltreatment), body condition and any identifiers (tags, microchips, tattoos...)

Objective: A brief and clear outline on assessing facilities, seller and short introduction to assessing the animal and its welfare. Specific detail on assessing each taxa is provided in Module 8.

#### **Module 5. Preparedness for the Confiscation and Management of Life Wildlife as Evidence**

Overview: Preparing for the confiscation of animals requires a specialized team. This module reviews the requirements of a confiscation unit, procedures, operating procedures, staff health and training requirements for WHS and resourcing.

Objective: To provide a baseline on requirements to establish a confiscation unit, protecting the health and welfare of the team and establishing operating procedures to ensure the best outcome for the animal(s), the investigation and potential prosecution of participants in the wildlife crime.

#### **Module 6. Pre-seizure Planning and Preparation**

Overview: This short module reinforces the risk potential to both staff and wildlife. Included is a checklist to ensure all preparation and procedures are in place before a confiscation takes place.

Objective: To provide a final verification that all risks have been considered, procedures and equipment are in place before proceeding with a confiscation.

#### **Module 7a. Protocols Required During and After Confiscation**

Overview: A methodical and safe approach is required in all aspects in confiscation. This first module provides a clear and precise list of protocols: from initial assessment, species identification, recording of unique animal identifiers, through to health and safety protocols. These protocols have been established to minimise biosecurity risks and safety risks for all staff involved in the collection of evidence and confiscation of wildlife.

Objective: To establish protocols and procedures for a team to safely record critical evidence for the prosecution of wildlife crimes.

#### **Module 7b. Protocols Required During and After Confiscation**

Overview: This second part focusses on protocols and practicalities for handling, restraining, holding and transporting wildlife safely. DNA sample collection and storage requirements are set out to ensure there is no degradation of the sample whilst waiting for analysis at a laboratory facility. The decision making process for animals after seizure has been included here to facilitate decisions on animal welfare. Further detailed handling procedures for various species are presented in Chapter 8.

Objective: To establish protocols and procedures for a team to safely handle wildlife, store critical evidence and decide on the outcome for the animal.

## **Module 8. Handling and Management of Confiscated Live Wildlife**

### **Planning**

Overview: Reviews Pre-, During and Post- Seizure planning and processes, to reinforce prior learning.

### **Part 1 - Handling and Management of Confiscated Live Birds**

Overview: Looking specifically into how to safely handle, identify and manage live birds, including Passerines, Birds of Prey and Parrots.

### **Part 2 – Handling and Management of Confiscated Live Reptiles**

Overview: This part looks into specifics on how to safely handle, house, transport and manage live reptiles. Turtles, Terrestrial Reptiles and Amphibians are detailed in this section.

### **Part 3 – Handling and Management of Confiscated Primates**

Overview: Infant or juvenile primates are often seized, as are animal parts for bush meat. This unit reviews how to seize, assess welfare, biosecurity and manage animals or animal parts post-seizure – and who to contact in the event of a seizure.

### **Part 4 – Handling and Management of Confiscated Fish**

Overview: A overview on seizing, assessing, counting and housing fish. Included are recommendations on volume density, water quality and temperatures, nutrition, biosecurity, zoonoses, management of filtration systems and euthanasia.

### **Part 5 – Handling and Management of Confiscated Insect**

Overview: Both live and dead insects are traded throughout the world. This section looks at how to handle live and preserve specimens, biosecurity concerns and recommended PPE. Included is a Collection of Evidence Chain showing the procedure from seizure through to providing evidence for court proceedings.

### **Part 6 – Handling and Management of Confiscated Carnivores**

Overview: Carnivores and their body parts is a global issue, impacting biodiversity.....

Module Outcome: To provide specific details on the seizure and management of animals, arming frontline teams with the knowledge on how to handle seized animals, how to record the seizure, collect samples, and look after animals remaining in their care until a professional caretaker (vet, animal specialist) is appointed.

## **Module 9. Decision-Making Tree for Disposition of Confiscated Wildlife**

Overview: Deciding on what should occur with the a confiscated animal can be a complex process and the welfare of the animal should always be a priority. There are two clearly mapped decision making pathways for confiscated animals included in this module – one for wild animals and deciding if they can be returned to the wild and options for management if they are not. A second reviews options available for captive animals to establish the best outcome for each animal.

Outcome: To facilitate clear decision making for the best outcome for the seized animal.