

Endangered wildlife species on the plate

EXOTIC MEAT: Poaching and trading of protected animals are on the rise to meet the increasing demand from diners who believe that animal parts and meat offer health benefits



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MORE endangered animals are ending up on the menu every year, as the domestic demand for “exotic” wildlife cuisine spikes.

The demand for endangered Malaysian animals from abroad is also high as they are aggressively hunted for decorative purposes or for their alleged medicinal properties, widely appreciated by those

practising traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

Despite extensive laws to protect the wildlife from being sold, consumed or kept as pets, conservationists have noted the existence of many eateries serving exotic dishes.

Among popular dishes are of wild boar, sun bear, python, *labi-labi* (freshwater softshell turtle), pangolin, tiger, leopard, serow, civet, flying fox and tortoise.

The Wildlife and National Parks Department (Perhilitan) has suggested that these animals were

poached from protected areas and forest reserves.

The department recorded 66 wildlife products, parts and derivatives seizure cases in 2011.

There were 54 seizures in 2012, 39 in 2013, 49 in 2014 and 14 cases, as of July this year. Of the number, 29 involved poaching.

Selangor topped the list with 82

cases, followed by Negri Sembilan (27), Kuala Lumpur (26) and Pahang (26).

These are areas where the demand for exotic food in restaurants and pharmaceutical products are greatest.

“The products seized include animal parts, ivory, wildlife skin products and TCM with bear bile, its gall bladder, powder

and skin as ingredients.

“They are also exported as luxury or decorative items, trophies, ornamental, handicraft or collectible items, or used in religious practices,” Perhilitan enforcement director Abdul Kadir Abu Hashim told the *New Straits Times*.

Perhilitan’s statistics showed that from 2011 to August this year, 46 cases involved restaurants in the peninsula offering exotic cuisine, while 30 cases involved TCM.

The number of cases involving restaurants increased from six in



Among the wild animals on sale on the black market

TIGER

Price:

Tiger (dead):	RM21,792
Tiger (live):	RM217,922
Tiger (baby):	RM13,947
Tiger skin:	RM152,545
Tiger bone:	RM8,716
Tiger bone wine:	RM383
Tiger penis:	RM5,665
Tiger remains (in China):	RM305,091

Parts used in trade: Bones, skin, tooth, whiskers, blood, body

Reason for trade: Traditional medicine, meat, trophy, decoration, amulet

Reason for consumption:

- **Brain:** For pimples and laziness
- **Noses:** Epilepsy and convulsions
- **Teeth:** For rabies, asthma and penis sores
- **Skin:** Mental illness
- **Flesh:** For nausea, malaria and energy
- **Blood:** Strength and willpower
- **Tail:** For skin diseases
- **Bile:** Convulsions in children

Price:

Rhino horn dagger:	RM61,018
Rhino horns per kg:	RM283,299
Rhino horns (crushed for medicine powder, in Vietnam):	RM43

Parts used in trade: Horn
(Rhinoceros horn was one of the world's most valuable substances, worth almost five times as much as gold)

Reason for trade: Traditional medicine

Reason for consumption: Believed to cure fever and headaches. Used as an anti-poison and jaundice treatment

RHINO

LEOPARD

Price:

in China: **RM24,843**

Parts used in trade:

Bones, skin

Reason for trade:
Traditional medicine, meat, trophy, decoration

ELEPHANT

Price:

Baby elephant in Thailand:	RM30,509
Elephant:	RM122,908
Elephant tusk in Vietnam:	RM7,845

Parts used in trade: Tusks, skin, hair, tooth, semen
Reason for trade: Decorative item, trophy
Reason for consumption: To recover from illness and to stay in good health

Parts used in trade:

Gall bladder and paws

Reason for trade: Traditional medicine, food, pets

Reason for consumption: To treat a variety of illnesses including fever, liver disease, convulsions, diabetes, and heart disease

Price: Bear in Taiwan:

RM19,613

Bile per kg:

RM2,179,225

Paws for a set of 4:

RM217

BEAR

PANGOLIN

Price:

Pangolin:	RM4,358
Meat per kg:	RM1,307
Scales per kg:	RM13,075

Parts used in trade:

Meat and scales

Reason for trade:

Traditional medicine, food

Reason for consumption:

Treat skin disorders and other ailments

Price: RM400

Parts used in trade:

Whole animal, antlers

Reason for trade:

Food, trophy

Reason for consumption:

Nutritious; various health benefits

DEER



SEROW

Parts used in trade:

Hair, horns

Reason for trade:

Traditional medicine

Parts used in trade:

Whole animal

Reason for trade:

Food

Reason for consumption:

To increase the vigour of human organs

FLYING FOX

Parts used in trade:

Whole animal

Reason for trade:

Food

Parts used in trade:

Whole animal

Reason for trade:

Food

Reason for consumption:

Nourishes blood

WILD BOAR

Price: RM80/kg