

Irresistible desire to live with animals

— Reports on Tokyo reptiles world 2013

Besides amphibians and reptiles, which were paid a lot of attentions during CITES CoP16, all imported animals including mammals (excluding dogs and cats), birds, and insects are called “exotic animals”.

“Tokyo reptiles world 2013” exhibited a collection of exotic animals from all over the world at once at Sunshine City in Ikebukuro, Tokyo on 18th and 19th of May.

*Tokyo reptiles world 2013(in Japanese)

<http://www.reptilesworld.jp/>

● Animals for sale as pets

The energetic site was full of various animals large and small put in small cages.

The event was so popular that it was difficult to walk through the site even though there were numbers of snake species that many people usually would get offended. Some visitors even brought their favorite pets with them, and everyone so happily watched the animals in admiration.

Snakes and chameleons were so diverse that probably no zoos had them all. Though not all the species exhibited there were recorded (because there were more animals and shops than estimated!); however, many mammals and reptiles (mainly turtles/tortoises) as possible were recorded.

Below is the list of animals recorded in the event. The most expensive one was a male White-faced saki, which was sold for 3.2 million yen/ individual.

• Mammals: White-Faced Saki (*Pithecia pithecia*), Indian Crested Porcupine (*Hystrix indica*), Common Marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*), Golden-Headed Lion Tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysomelas*), Squirrel Monkeys (*Saimiri sciureus*), Pygmy Slow Lorises (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*), Ringtailed Coati (*Nasua nasua*), Meerkat (*Suricata suricatta*), Prairie Dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*), Garden Dormouse (*Eliomys quercinus*), Common Tree-Shrew (*Tupaia glis*), Indian Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa indica*), Siberian Chipmunks (*Nivea tamias sibiricus*), English Angora Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), Hedgehog (Erinaceinae), Sugar Glider (*Petaurus breviceps*), Roborovskii Hamster (*Phodopus roborovskii*), Fulvous Fruit Bats (*Rousettus leschenault*)

• Turtles/tortoises: African Leopard Tortoise (*Stigmochelys pardalis*), Red-Footed Tortoise (*Geochelone carbonaria*), Horsfield's Tortoises (*Testudo horsfieldi/Agrionemys horsfieldii*), Bell's Hinged Tortoise (*Kinixys belliana*), Burmese Starred Tortoise (*Geochelone platynota*), Kimberley Red-Faced Turtle (*Emydura australis*), Red-Bellied Short-Necked Turtle (*Emydura subglobosa*), Red-Eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), Four Eyed Turtle (*Sacalia quadriocellata*), Yellow-headed Temple Turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*), East African Serrated Mud Turtle (*Pelusios sinuatus*), Madagascar Big-headed Turtle (*Erymnochelys madagascariensis*), Midland Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta marginata*), Greece Tortoise/Spur-Thighed Tortoise (*Testudo graeca*), Eastern Leopard Tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis babcocki*), Russian tortoise Marginated Tortoise (*Testudo marginata*), Japanese Pond Turtle (*Mauremys japonica*), Yellow-Margined Box Turtle (*Cuora flavomarginata*), Indochinese Box Turtle (*Cuora galbinifrons*), Vietnam Box Turtle (*Cuora galbinifrons galbinifrons*), Mata Mata (*Chelus fimbriatus*)

• Non-turtle/tortoise reptiles: Peach-throat Monitor (*Varanus jobiensis*), Anguid Lizard/Brazilian Galliwasp (*Diploglossus lessonae*), Club Tail Iguana (*Enyaliosaurus paelaris*), African Wall Gecko (*Tarentola ephippiata*), Ocellated Velvet Gecko (*Oedura monilis*), Nosy Be Panther Chameleon/Blue Chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*), Japanese Fire-bellied Newt (*Cynops pyrrhogaster*), Saharan Spiny-tailed Lizard/Saharan Uromastix (*Uromastix geyri*), Ball Python (Python regius), Oregon Red-spotted Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis concinnus*), Florida Blue Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*), Kenyan Sand Boa/ Egyptian sand boa (*Eryx colubrinus loveridgei*), Nuevo Leon Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis mexicana thayeri*), Rough Green Snake (*Opheodrys aestivus*), Dyeing Poison Dart Frog (*Dendrobates tinctorius*), Summers' Poison Frog (*Ranitomeya summersi*)

*Note: Above species names may be different from the standard English names as they were based on the Japanese names on the tags written by sellers.

*You can see the photos of the event and sold animals here (The web site is in Japanese):

<http://www.reptilesworld.jp/gallery/index.html>



Photo of the crowded event with excited reptiles fans



Hundreds of stacked cages with exotic animals in

● Animals on CITES Appendix

The animals traded in the event included newly discovered and re-evaluated species during CITES CoP16, which would be added to the list after June 12th, as well as the species which had already been under generous conservation efforts. The species listed in CITES Appendices I and designated as international endangered species evaluated by “Amendment of Endangered Species Law”(the Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) were displayed with the registration forms.

For example, slow loris, one of the International Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which is listed in Endangered Species Law, traded in the event was captured before the Law came into effect and priced at 650,000 to 800,000 yen. Another case was Golden-headed Lion Tamarin, also an International Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, was on trade strictly for domestic breeding purpose therefore microchipped. However, CITES Appendices II listed poison

dart frogs and some turtles/tortoises such as Yellow-headed Temple Turtle and Testudinidae tortoises were relatively moderate in price, and quite a few of them were sold.

Some Burmese Starred Tortoise, which would be added to the list from June 12th in response to CITES CoP16 proposal, and Indochinese Box Turtle, whose conservation rules were further intensified to reduce the quota of wild samples for commercial use as low as 0 (zero), were on trade, too.

*Reference 1: CITES website – the CITES Appendices) (As of 2013/6/12)

<http://www.cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

*Reference 2: CITES website – Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties Proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II

<http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/16/prop/index.php>

*Reference 3: Press reports by Ministry of the Environment About the publication of “Amendment of Endangered Species Law” (announcement, in Japanese)

<http://www.env.go.jp/press/press.php?serial=16733>

● Traded wild animals in Japan

As mentioned in the above lists, Japanese wild animals were no exception and sold.

Significant numbers of small turtles/tortoises such as Japanese Pond Turtle in particular were put into buckets and sold for 2,800 yen/ individual.

Forest green treefrog was for 1,300 yen/ individual, Schlegel's Green Tree Frog was for 500 yen/ individual, and Miyako Toad, which the seller said was originated from Daito Islands, was sold for 2,800 yen/ individual.

In addition to Japanese species, some overseas raptors such as Scops Owls/Screech Owls and kestrels were there. It was presumed such animals including Yellow-margined Box Turtle, the National Protected Species, were first captured overseas then brought into Japan. The animals rested quietly on perches attracted many visitors because raptors in wild were usually seen from distance only by binoculars, thus many visitors crowded before the cages and shot pictures.

Some of these species have declined in numbers due to the environmental changes and invasive species.

Having such adorable animals as pets waiting for you to come back home is irresistible desire for animal lovers.

But the fact is buying such animals is equally threatening wildlife no matter where they are from.

All we can do is to hope no more animals will be traded as home pets in the future.



Pond Turtle sold in a bucket



A bird of Kestrels family

Reported by Mitsuko Hirose

Translated by Junko Matsuoka