

AFCD is concerned about injury case caused by wild pig

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) expressed its concern today (July 29) about a wild pig attacking members of the public near Fo Tan MTR Station yesterday (July 28), which resulted in the injury of two members of the public.

The AFCD received a referral from the Police at noon yesterday that a wild pig attacked citizens near Fo Tan MTR Station and caused injuries. The Department immediately sent staff to the scene to follow up and anesthetized the wild pig with a tranquilizer gun and captured it. Considering that the wild pig had attacked members of the public and its continual presence in urban areas would pose a danger to the public, the AFCD officers dispatched it humanely to ensure the public safety.

To safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD implemented new measures in November 2021 to capture the wild pigs for humane dispatch at sites with presence of large numbers of wild pigs, with cases of wild pigs injuring citizens, or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public. Furthermore, the AFCD also conducts operations to capture the wild pigs upon receiving wild pig sighting reports in urban areas or near residential areas from the public or other government departments. During the operations, AFCD officers use dart guns with anaesthetics to capture the wild pigs, and perform humane dispatch on them through medicine injection.

An AFCD spokesman said, "Since the implementation of the new measures, a total of 540 wild pigs have been humanely dispatched, with the number of wild pig nuisance blackspots decreased from 63 in 2021 to 42 in 2022. There has also been a downward trend in the number of public reports of wild pig sightings or nuisance received by the AFCD, from over 1,400 cases in 2021 to about 1,100 cases in 2022 and about 440 cases as of May 2023. Furthermore, the number of injury cases caused by wild pigs has also decreased from 20 cases in 2021 and 36 cases in 2022 to four cases as of July 2023."

The spokesman further said, "The AFCD is very concerned about the injuries of citizens caused by wild pig attacks. The Department expresses sympathies to the injured and hope that they will recover soon."

He said that the public should stay calm upon encountering wild pigs, and refrain from approaching and disturbing them. If necessary, hide behind obstacles and wait for the wild pigs to leave before proceeding. Do not throw or drive the wild pigs with objects, so as not to provoke the wild pigs and cause danger. If wild pigs pose an immediate threat to personal safety, please call 999 immediately for help.

The spokesman pointed out that the amended Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) has extended the feeding ban area for wild animals to the whole of Hong Kong. Anyone who illegally feeds wild

animals (including wild pigs) shall be liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 upon conviction. The Government will also introduce an amendment bill into the Legislative Council within this year for further amendments to the Ordinance, with a view to, amongst others, regulating feeding activities of feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals, and introducing a fixed penalty.

The spokesman reiterated that the AFCD will continue to strengthen the implementation of wild pig capture and dispatch operations to reduce wild pig nuisance, and strengthen law enforcement on wild pig feeding activities to reduce the incentives to attract wild pigs to appear in urban areas or near residential areas. He appealed to the public not to feed wild animals, so as not to change their natural habits and disrupt the ecological balance, and cause problems such as environmental hygiene and nuisance.