

## **AFCD reminds public not to bring endangered species into Hong Kong illegally (with photos)**

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (January 20) reminded members of the public not to bring endangered species into Hong Kong without a required licence when returning from visits to other places.

A spokesman for the AFCD said, "As some plant and animal species are facing the threat of extinction due to over-exploitation, the import and export of such species are regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) is the local legislation that gives effect to CITES in Hong Kong. Under the Ordinance, the import, export, re-export or possession of endangered animals and plants, including their parts and/or derivatives, is subject to control under a licensing system."

Any person who contravenes the Ordinance, even for non-commercial purposes, commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000,000 and imprisonment for 10 years upon conviction and the forfeiture of the specimens. About 550 seizures were made in 2024. The specimens seized included live orchids (including artificially propagated species such as moth orchid), American ginseng, dried seahorses, gastrodia, dendrobium and shark fins of scheduled shark species.

"As the Chinese New Year holiday approaches, there have been a number of recent cases in which members of the public were intercepted for illegally bringing orchids into Hong Kong from the Mainland. Members of the public should pay attention to whether the plant and animal products they intend to buy from places outside Hong Kong are endangered species. It might not be easy to identify whether the wildlife products originate from endangered species. Therefore, members of the public are advised not to buy such items if they cannot ascertain whether the items are subject to control," the spokesman continued.

The Government is committed to the protection of endangered species. The AFCD and Hong Kong Customs will continue to work closely and step up their enforcement work in combating the illegal trade in endangered species. For information on endangered species, please call 1823 or visit [www.cites.hk](http://www.cites.hk).

