



**SUPER**

# SNIFFER digest

Issues 5 & 6; July 2019

TRAFFIC's e-newsletter to celebrate achievements of its wildlife sniffer dogs in India



## WILDLIFE SNIFFER DOG TRAINING PROGRAMME

**Launched in India:** In 2008 by TRAFFIC's India Office with support from WWF-India.

**Who are Super Sniffers?:** These are wildlife sniffer dogs trained under TRAFFIC's programme and are popularly called Super Sniffers.

**Purpose:** To stop poaching, seize illegal wildlife products, help apprehend poachers and act as strong deterrents to wildlife criminal acts in India.

**Number of wildlife sniffer dog squads trained:** So far 66; 10 passed out in Dec 2018.

**States/UTs of deployment:** 19

**Wildlife sniffer dog training centres:** 3

**Trained to detect:** Tiger bone and skin, Leopard bone and skin, Elephant tusk, bear bile, Yarsa Gumba and other wildlife

**Number of seizures conducted:** 250+



### Canines for Felines:

Contest for Wildlife Sniffer Dogs in India

**Coming Soon!** Results for *Canines for Felines*, special contest for wildlife sniffer dog squads trained under TRAFFIC's programme in India, to celebrate their contribution towards curbing tiger poaching and illegal trade on Global Tiger Day, 29 July 2019. Visit [www.trafficindia.org](http://www.trafficindia.org)

## NEW BATCH TO BEGIN WILDLIFE SNIFFER DOG TRAINING SOON: TRAFFIC CALLS OUT FOR NOMINATIONS

**P**oaching and illegal wildlife trade is posing a serious threat to the future of wild flora and fauna. In India, besides the charismatic species such as Rhinos, Elephants, Tiger, Leopard and Snow Leopard various lesser known wildlife species such as turtles and tortoises, pangolin, monitor lizards, Red Sand Boa, Tokay Gecko and birds have been on the radar of wildlife smugglers. A TRAFFIC study found at least 5,772 pangolins in illegal wildlife trade in India during the period 2009–2017. Clearly, wildlife crime driven by huge profits is an organised crime that needs an organised response. Use of wildlife sniffer dogs for detecting and tracking wildlife crime is proving to be a game changer.



**NEW BEGINNING:** TRAFFIC's eighth batch of wildlife sniffer dogs will begin training in August at the 23rd Battalion Special Armed Force, Police Dog Training Centre, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. To partner, enforcement agencies must nominate two handlers from their department who along with the young dog will undergo the process of transforming into a wildlife sniffer dog squad. The entire cost of procuring the dog, training, welfare and upkeep during the training period is covered by TRAFFIC with financial support from various donors in India and abroad. Once deployed, the welfare and upkeep of the wildlife sniffer dog squad is the responsibility of the deploying agency.

The training period of nine months is divided into three crucial stages of learning. The first phase allows the handlers and the young dog of age 6-9 months to spend time together in order to build a bond and a trusting relationship. As these young dogs and handlers near the end of the first stage of training, they have mastered the discipline that will become the basis of their careers as wildlife sniffer and detector dog squads.

During the second phase of the training programme, the dogs begin to learn and develop skills for sniffing wildlife products, assisting in wildlife seizures and nabbing poachers. They are rigorously trained for scent detection, tracking, searching and sniffing wildlife products.

In the third and the final phase of the training, the dog squads continue to perfect their skills while they are given field exposure similar to the conditions in the real world once they pass out of the academy. A set up is made for the dog squads to detect and seize illegal wildlife trade products from almost real time situations. These dogs are trained to help apprehend poachers and investigate the crime scene for evidence.

Gauging from the success of the wildlife sniffer dog programme in India, TRAFFIC encourages enforcement agencies such as the Forest Department, Customs, Railways and Para Military Forces to come forward to partner and deploy wildlife sniffer dog squads to end smuggling of wildlife contrabands across the country.

**Write to TRAFFIC's India Office at [trafficind@wwfindia.net](mailto:trafficind@wwfindia.net) to partner or support through donations.**

**Dog Trivia!** Do you know that short-snouted or flat-faced dogs have fewer scent detecting receptor cells than the longer snout dogs such as German Shepherds, which have over 225 million.

### Editorial Team:

Saket Badola; [saket.badola@traffic.org](mailto:saket.badola@traffic.org)  
Amar Nath Choudhary; [amarnath.choudhary@traffic.org](mailto:amarnath.choudhary@traffic.org)  
Dilpreet B. Chhabra; [dilpreet.chhabra@traffic.org](mailto:dilpreet.chhabra@traffic.org)

**Photo credit:** Saket Badola (Masthead); TRAFFIC (Others)



### Contact:

TRAFFIC's India Office  
c/o WWF-India Secretariat; 172-B, Lodi Estate  
New Delhi-110003  
Email: [trafficind@wwfindia.net](mailto:trafficind@wwfindia.net)  
Website: [www.traffic.org](http://www.traffic.org) & [www.trafficindia.org](http://www.trafficindia.org)