

# **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSITIVE LIST FOR MAMMAL PETS IN BELGIUM: A SUCCESS STORY**

*An Analysis And Evaluation Of The Implementation And  
Enforcement Of The Positive List Legislation In Belgium*

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**Authors:** *Ilaria Di Silvestre, Stephanie van der Hoeven*

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# SUMMARY

*A positive list is a list of species that are allowed to be kept as pets, with or without the requirement of a permit or authorisation. This is an efficient, clear and precautionary way to reduce the risks caused by exotic species and to minimize their welfare problems.*

As Belgium has been the first European Union country which adopted a positive list system to regulate the keeping and sale of exotic pets, this offers an excellent opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the system. This is the objective of this research which analysed the data from cases of illegally kept mammals in Belgium, recorded in a period of 6 years (from the 1st January 2009 until the 31st December 2014). Data originating from three different sources – Federal Public Service of Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (FPS), AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection and Natuurhulpcentrum – were included in the data analysis.

In addition, the study investigated eleven Belgian websites between November and December 2015. Other sources of online advertisements have been analysed as well, such as Facebook groups to buy and sell exotic mammals in Belgium.

In total, 46 cases of rescued and confiscated exotic mammals have been recorded in the period 2009-2014, corresponding to 129 animals and an average of 7.7 cases (21.6 animals) per year. 22 cases related to confiscations (92 individuals), while 15 cases related to animals voluntarily handed over to rescue centres (22 individuals, for an average of 2.5 cases per year). 15 stray exotic animals have been rescued (average of 2.5 per year).

*In total, exotic mammals belonging to 29 species have been confiscated/rescued in Belgium between 2009 and 2014.*

Out of the eleven examined websites, only four published illegal advertisements. In total, 12 advertisements were found selling illegal mammals, for a total of 23 animals. The most commonly advertised species were the sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*) and the porcupine (*Hystrix* spp).

*The present research demonstrates that the adoption of a Positive List in Belgium has been very effective in regulating the trade of the exotic mammal pets.*



# INTRODUCTION

## CONTEXT

The exotic pet trade is booming all around the world and is currently worth billions of euros annually (Praud and Moutou, 2010). This trade has nevertheless been the cause of many problems such as jeopardizing the welfare of the animals, spreading invasive alien species, causing zoonotic diseases, fueling illegal trade/crime and spreading illness among livestock leading to the preventive culling of thousands of farm animals. These are all direct consequences of absent or inadequate laws and regulations on exotic pet trade.

Evidence shows that introducing a positive list – a list of species that are allowed to be kept as pets – is the most efficient way to reduce the risks caused by exotic species. The general principle of a positive list is to limit the keeping to species of animals for which the welfare can be assured in a household environment by an average owner. A positive list is concise, precautionary in nature, clear, and easy to be updated and enforced.

Belgium introduced a Positive List for mammals by Royal Decree in 2001. This unprecedented legislative move caused a stir in national and international circles and in 2007 the regulation was challenged in court by the pet trade industry as hindering trade within EU Member States. In June 2008, the European Court of Justice ruled that the Belgian Positive List was not in violation of EU free trade regulations as long as it was based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria and a procedure was in place for parties to request the inclusion of species on the list (Andibel ruling, case C-219/07). To ensure this was reflected in the law, the Belgian government replaced the existing law with a new Royal Decree (16 July 2009) maintaining a positive

list with the same 42 species (see Annex 1) and including criteria according to which species can be evaluated for their inclusion on the list.

The criteria for being included on the positive list in Belgium are:

1. **Animal welfare:** *Animals must be easy to keep and be kept with respect to their essential physiological, ethological and ecological needs.*
2. **Environment:** *No species should be listed for which there are clear indications that, in case an animal escapes, it would be able to survive in nature and consequently represent an ecological risk.*
3. **Human health:** *The animals should not be aggressive by nature and/or dangerous, or expose the health of humans to any other particular danger.*
4. **Husbandry:** *Bibliographic information must be available concerning the keeping of these animals.*
5. **No doubt:** *In case of contradictory data or information on the possibilities to keep an animal, the animal should be given the benefit of doubt, i.e. it will not be on the list.*

According to the text of the legislation, exceptions can be made for specialised keepers who prove they have the expertise and appropriate housing facilities to enable the keeping of the animals according to their needs.

The Netherlands too have adopted a Positive List for mammals in January 2015. In other

EU Member States legislation is very diverse (Eurogroup for Animals, 2013). When they exist, most of the legal provisions ban the keeping of only a limited number of species (negative or black lists). However, the examples of Belgium and the Netherlands are getting traction in an increasing number of countries that are now starting the procedures to adopt positive lists as well.

## SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

As Belgium was the first European country to adopt a positive list back in 2001, several years of data are now available offering an excellent opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the system in controlling the illegal market of exotic pets.

Although the Belgian government officially declared on several occasions that the Positive

List system efficiently reduced the number of illegal animals sold in pet shops allowing for a social control of the illegal market, clear evidence supporting this view was lacking.

The objective of this research was to give a clear overview of the number of cases of illegally kept mammals in Belgium after the definitive adoption of the Positive List in 2009.

Considering the period between January 2009 and December 2014, the research focused on three main questions:

- *How many illegally kept exotic mammals were confiscated?*
- *How many illegally kept exotic mammals were given voluntarily to a rescue centre?*
- *How many exotic mammals are illegally sold online in Belgium?*



# 1. METHODOLOGY

*The research project combined the analysis of existing data with the collection and analysis of further data from the web.*

As far as existing data are concerned, we considered data collected from a total of six different sources over a period of 6 years (from the 1st January 2009 until the 31st December 2014). However, as explained below, only the data obtained from the Federal Public Service of Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (FPS), AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection and Natuurhulpcentrum have actually been analysed and included in the results.

We only used data from January 2009 because the first version of the list, adopted in 2001, was contested in court by the pet industry in 2007, cancelled, then approved again in 2008 and definitely adopted in 2009. Furthermore only data concerning seized or rescued exotic mammal species not included in the Positive List have been collected and analysed.

Data were sorted in the following categories: (1) animals confiscated (2) animals voluntarily handed over to rescue centres and (3) rescued stray animals. Overlap of data between different sources was avoided thanks to the rigorous and detailed information recorded by AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection and Natuurhulpcentrum concerning each individual animal (see below in 1.1).

Furthermore, we collected and analysed data from the web. Eleven Belgian private advertisement websites have been scrutinized to quantify the online trade of exotic mammals, during a period of 8 weeks (November – December 2015): tweedehands.be, 2ememain.be, kapaza.be, aanbod.be, jannonce.be, vivastreet.be,

koopjeskrant.be, marktplaza.be, tekoopjes.be, expatads.com and petzlovers.com. These are the most popular and visited private advertisements websites in Belgium. They have been checked daily during the investigation period and all advertisements offering mammals belonging to species not included in the Positive List have been recorded (the species, quantity offered for sale, date). One advertisement mentioned several animals without specifying the exact number, in which case the number of 2 animals was recorded.

In addition to advertisement websites, 3 Facebook groups created to buy or sell exotic mammals in Europe or Belgium have been scrutinized: Exotic Mammal Trade (Europe), Exotic Animals for Sale Europe and Exotische Dieren. Finally, online discussion fora and pet shop websites have also been regularly checked to collate data.

## 1.1 EXPLAINING THE MULTIPLE DATA SOURCES

According to Belgian animal welfare law, [several competent authorities are entitled to track and/or prosecute violations of this law](#) (Landbouw Justitie, 2015), namely:

- [Federal and Local Police \(here named “Police”\) – only until July 2015.](#)

The environmental department of the Federal Police is responsible for animal welfare crimes. However, since August 2015 animal welfare competences have been regionalised, deferred to newly created Animal Welfare Departments within the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels public administration. These competences include the following enforcement tasks: detection of illegal animal trade, per-

forming and coordinating research, recording of data in EU-TWIX database, providing expertise, participation in national and international fora on related matters.

There is no centralisation of intelligence anymore at the federal level. One would expect such intelligence did however exist before 2015 in a centralized manner.

- *Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (FPS) including the department for animal welfare and the Federal Inspection Agency for Food Safety, responsible for the implementation of controls.*

Animal welfare was shifted from a federal competence to a regional competence in 2015.

During the research period (2009-2014) however, FPS was still responsible for investigating and recording illegal activities concerning animals, making inspections according to the animal welfare legislation, receiving authorization applications for the keeping of animals which are not included in the Positive List (FOD Volksgezondheid, Veiligheid van de Voedselketen en leefmilieu, 2015).

Both therefore constitute important sources of data for our research.

*Private rescue centres on the other hand, play a key role in sheltering* confiscated or abandoned animals, as no governmental rescue centre exists in Belgium, and therefore constitute another critical source of information for this research.

Natuurhulpcentrum, Antwerp Zoo and Pairi Daiza Zoo have a collaboration contract with the FPS (Herkes, 2012). Yet, almost all confiscated, voluntarily handed over or rescued stray exotic animals in Belgium end up in the rescue centres Natuurhulpcentrum (in Belgium) and AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection (in the Netherlands) (Décory, 2014).

Besides exotic animals, Natuurhulpcentrum shelters also sick and injured wild animals of native species and prepares their return into the wild. They have a limited capacity for sheltering exotic mammals which is why they work closely with AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection’s rescue center.

AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection, having two rescue centres, one located in the Netherlands and another in Spain, gives primates and other exotic mammals a better future through rescue, rehabilitation, outplacement and public policy work. It regularly receives requests from Natuurhulpcentrum, Belgian private pet owners, or the Belgian authorities.

The data collected from rescue centres include both the animals that have been actually rescued and the ones for which rescuing requests have been submitted, but denied because of the limited capacity of the centres.

The Zoo of Antwerp and Pairi Daiza zoo only occasionally receive some confiscated animals. Each of them also keeps track of the rescued animals which explains why we have six sources of data for this research.

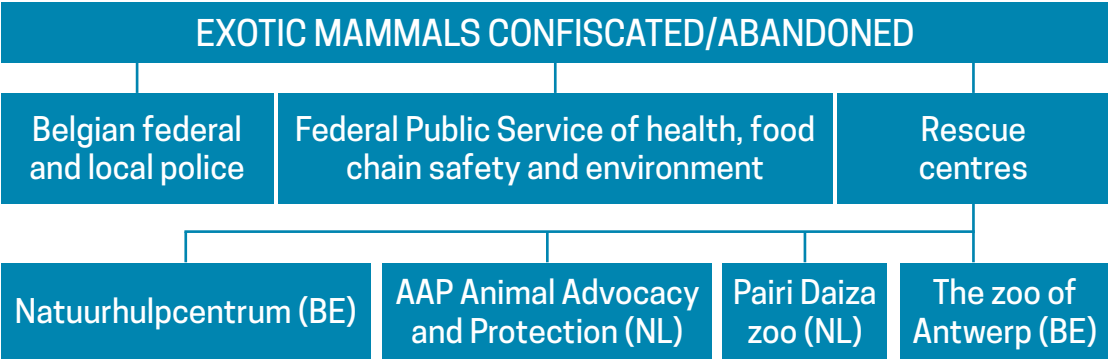


Figure 1. Six sources of data used as a base for this research



## 1.2. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Data collection and analysis were hampered by several challenges due to the multiplicity and diversity of data sources as well as due to the potential overlap between those data.

A *slight underestimation* of the number of cases in our research is possible, due to the impossibility to obtain data from the Police and the Zoos.

Because the Police is not responsible for the detection of animal crime anymore since the State reform of 2015 shifted animal welfare competences from the federal to the regional level, the person contacted during our research refused to provide data on previous confiscations.

However, because confiscation data from the Police should have been regularly transmitted to the FPS and then reflected in the information collected by the rescue centers where animals were sheltered, we estimate that our research was able to capture most of the relevant data.

Prairie Daiza did not respond to our phone calls or emails, therefore no data have been received from them. Finally, the Zoo of Antwerp refused to provide data about the sheltered confiscated animals stating that all the relevant information appears in the records of FPS.

Despite the rigor applied during research, we also cannot guarantee the total absence of *overlap* in data. FPS data do not systematically record the animal species contrary to rescue centers that do it. Consequently, data from AAP and Natuurhulpcentrum have been triangulated with data from FPS to identify and eliminate overlap; however we cannot totally exclude the occurrence of overlap which may have occurred in a limited number of cases.

In addition, we found some *inconsistencies* among the data recorded by AAP, Natuurhulpcentrum and the FPS. Indeed, in a few cases AAP recorded a confiscation made on a particular date by the FPS which was not recorded by the FPS itself. However, these inconsistencies were anecdotal.

*Weighing everything up, we consider that the systematic comparison of data obtained from the different sources allowed for a sufficiently accurate estimation of the number of confiscated exotic pet mammals in Belgium, and that the research results are therefore credible, representative and reliable.*

We therefore consider that the present report provides a sufficiently accurate estimation of the exotic mammals confiscated in Belgium after the final adoption of the Positive List.

# 2. RESULTS

As mentioned above, the findings below result from the analysis of data collected by the FPS, Natuurhulpcentrum and AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection during the period 2009-2014. The results are split in the following categories: “Confiscations”, “Voluntarily Delivered”, “Stray”, “Total overview” and “Online trade”.

## 2.1. CONFISCATIONS

22 confiscations have been recorded in 6 years, for a total of 92 animals. Table 1 gives an overview of the number of cases and number of confiscated animals per year.

The high number of confiscated animals in 2012 is due to one single confiscation of 26 raccoons (*Procyon lotor*). Figure 2 shows the difference per year. The highest number of cases has been recorded in 2012, the lowest in 2013, with an average of 3.7 cases per year.

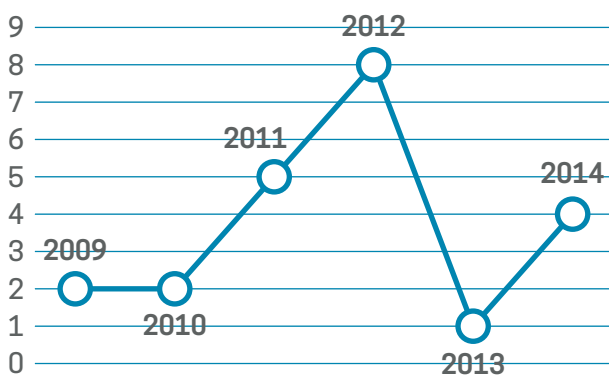


Figure 2. Number of cases

In total, 23 different species were confiscated in the period 2009-2014. The most frequently confiscated species are raccoons, Barbary macaques (*Macaca sylvanus*) and brown nosed coati (*Nasua nasua*). Figure 3 shows an overview of the confiscations per order.

Year	Nr. of cases	Nr. of animals
2009	2	9
2010	2	5
2011	5	5
2012	8	58
2013	1	2
2014	4	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>92</b>

Table 1. Overview of confiscated mammals in Belgium (2009-2014)

Most of the confiscated species belong to order of Carnivora; in total 43 carnivores, mainly raccoons, have been confiscated. Primates are the second most frequently confiscated order, with 21 individuals. Finally, the Barbary macaque is the most commonly confiscated primate species (13 individuals).

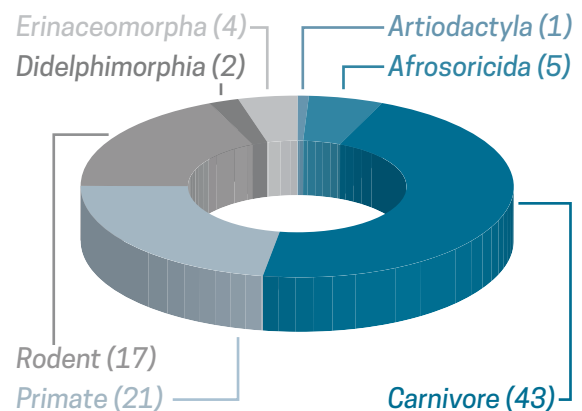


Figure 3. Number of confiscations per order

2.2. ANIMALS VOLUNTARILY DELIVERED TO RESCUE CENTRES

During the period between 2009 and 2014, rescue centres received a limited number of requests from private owners who wished to get rid of their exotic pets.

Year	Due to positive list	Other reasons
2009	1	6
2010	2	1
2011	-	2
2012	-	2
2013	-	-
2014	6	2
Sub-total	9	13
Total	22	

Table 2. Number of mammals voluntarily delivered to rescue centers

In total **15 persons delivered 22 animals** voluntarily to rescue centres during the analysed period (2009-2014), for an **average of 2.5 cases per year**. Only five of them (9 animals) were clearly consequence of the adoption of the Positive List. The owners bought the animal without knowing that this was illegal to be kept in Belgium, and therefore they decided to deliver the animal to a rescue centre. 10 persons (for a total of 13 animals) delivered the animals to rescue centres for other reasons (e.g. difficulties to take care of them).

Primates were the most frequently order voluntarily delivered to rescue centres (13 primates in 9 cases). The species that was most commonly delivered to rescue centers is the Barbary macaque (5 animals).

2.3. STRAY ANIMALS

In total, **15 animals** have been rescued between 2009 and 2014 because they were found as stray (**average of 2.5/year**).

Year	Number of animals
2009	1
2010	2
2011	5
2012	1
2013	1
2014	5
Total	15

Table 3. Overview of rescued stray animals per year

The most frequently rescued stray species is the raccoon (7 individuals), followed by four jungle cats (*Felis chaus*; a female with three kittens), two Barbary macaques, one stripped skunk (*Mephitis Mephitis*) and one black-capped capuchin (*Cebus Apella*).



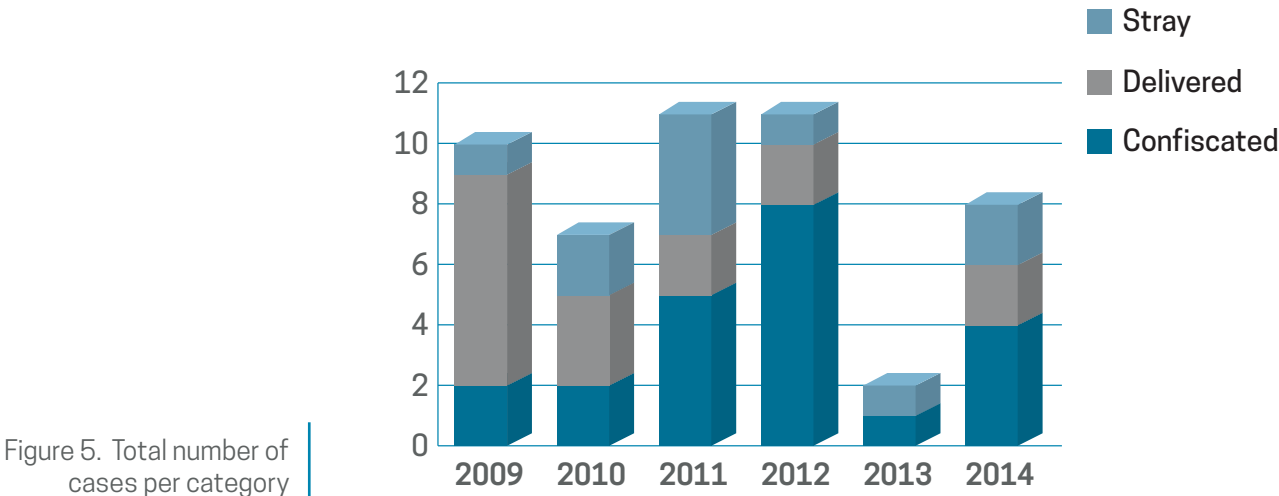
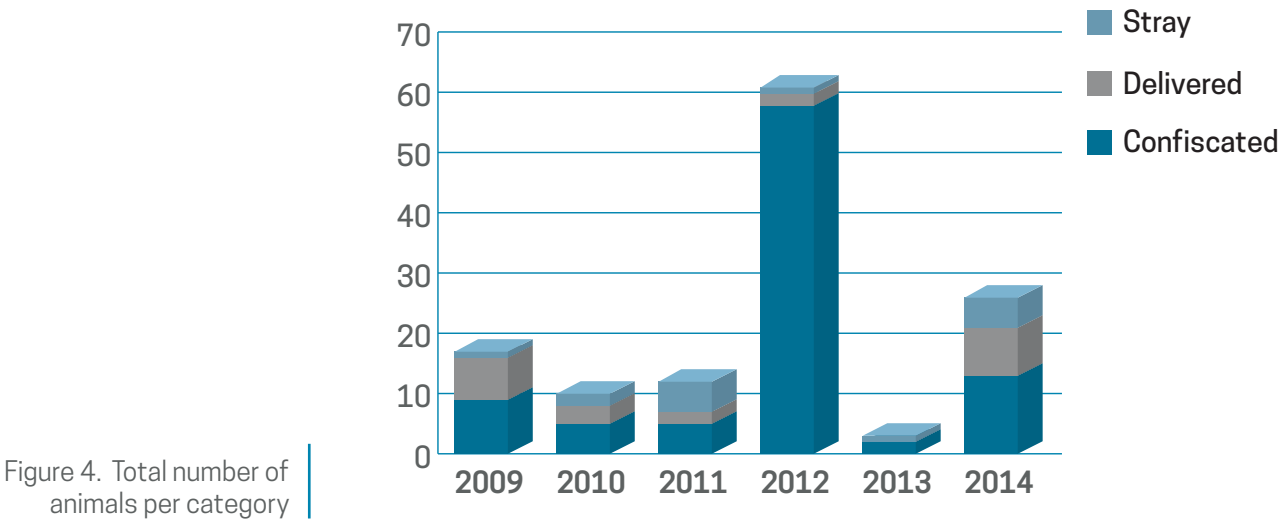
## 2.4. TOTAL OVERVIEW

In total, *46 cases of rescued and confiscated mammals* have been recorded in the period 2009-2014, corresponding to *129 animals* and an *average of 7.7 cases (21.6 animals) per year*.

Category	Nr. of cases	Nr. of animals
Confiscated	22	92
Voluntarily delivered	15	22
Stray	9	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>129</b>

Table 4. Total overview

Figures 4 and 5 show the total number of individuals and of cases per category per year respectively. The highest number of cases has been recorded in 2011 and 2012 (11 cases in total), while the lowest number in 2013 (2 cases in total).





The most frequently rescued/confiscated mammals were belonging to the order of Carnivora (67 individuals, mainly raccoons), followed by primates (26 individuals, mainly Barbary macaques) and rodents (18 individuals, mainly squirrels spp.).

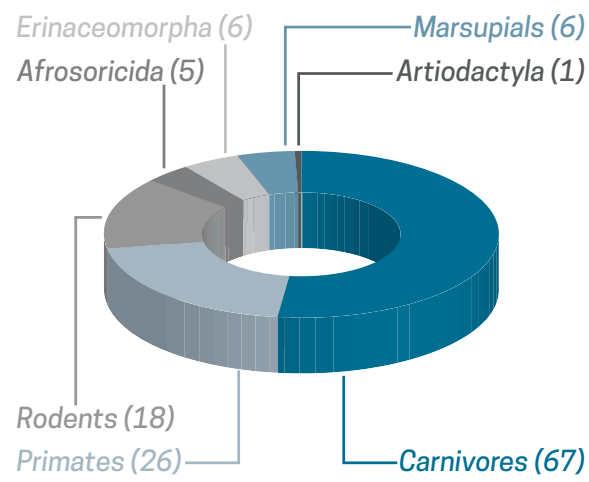


Figure 6. Total number of confiscated/rescued mammals per order



Table 5 gives an overview of the total list of mammals belonging to 29 species that have been confiscated/rescued in Belgium between 2009 and 2014.

Order	English name	Scientific name	Number
<b>Afrosoricida</b>	Tenrec	Tenrec Ecaudatus	5
<b>Artiodactyla</b>	Roe deer	Capreolus Capreolus	1
<b>Carnivore</b>	Banded mongoose	Mungos mungo	2
<b>Carnivore</b>	Brown-nosed coati	Nasua Nasua	10
<b>Carnivore</b>	Fox	Vulpes Vulpes	1
<b>Carnivore</b>	Jungle cat	Felis Chaus	4
<b>Carnivore</b>	Raccoon	Procyon Lotor	46
<b>Carnivore</b>	Raccoon dog	Nyctereutes Procyonoides	2
<b>Carnivore</b>	Skunk	Mephitis Mephitis	1
<b>Carnivore</b>	Banded mongoose	Mungos Mungo	2
<b>Erinaceomorpha</b>	Four-toed hedgehog	Atelerix Albiventris	3
<b>Erinaceomorpha</b>	Long-eared hedgehog	Hemiechinus Auritus	3
<b>Marsupial</b>	Sugar glider	Petaurus Breviceps	4
<b>Marsupial</b>	Virginia opossum	Didelphis Virginiana	2
<b>Primate</b>	Barbary macaque	Macaca Sylvanus	14
<b>Primate</b>	Black-capped Capuchin	Cebus Apella	1
<b>Primate</b>	Capuchin monkey	Cebus Capucinus	1
<b>Primate</b>	Common marmoset	Callithrix Jacchus	3
<b>Primate</b>	Mona monkey	Cercopithecus Mona	1
<b>Primate</b>	Monkey spp.	Cercopithecini spp.	3
<b>Primate</b>	Red-handed tamarin	Saguinus Midas	1
<b>Primate</b>	Rhesus macaque	Macaca Mulatta	2
<b>Primate</b>	Squirrel monkey	Simia Sciureus	1
<b>Rodent</b>	American red squirrel	Tamiasciurus Hudsonicus	3
<b>Rodent</b>	Eastern gray squirrel	Sciurus Carolinensis	3
<b>Rodent</b>	Fat dormouses	Glis glis	6
<b>Rodent</b>	Giant pouched rat	Genus Cicetomys	2
<b>Rodent</b>	Nutria	Myocastor Coypus	1
<b>Rodent</b>	Porcupine	Hystrix spp.	1
<b>Rodent</b>	Squirrel spp.	Sciuridae spp.	2

Table 5. Overview of confiscated/rescued species

## 2.5. ONLINE TRADE OF EXOTIC MAMMALS

Since the FPS doesn't own the resources to regularly control the online trade, we conducted an online investigation during a period of 8 weeks from 1 November to 31 December 2015, in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the illegal trade on exotic mammal pets in Belgium.

This chapter summarises the results of our research.

### 2.5.1. Advertisements

11 of the most commonly visited private advertisements websites in Belgium have been investigated: tweedehands.be, 2ememain.be, kapaza.be, aanbod.be, jannonce.be, vivastreet.be, koopjeskrant.be, marktplaza.be, tekoopjes.be,

expatads.com and petzlovers.com. Some of them such as tweedehands.be focus on the Flemish speaking part of the Belgian population, while others like 2ememain.be, address the French speaking population. In total, 12 advertisements (average of 6 per month) have been found to illegally sell mammal species not included in the Positive List, for a total of 23 animals (average of 11 animals per month). Figure 7 shows the number of species for sale. Most advertisements were offering sugar gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) and porcupines (*Hystrix* spp.: 5 individuals were offered in one single advertisement).

Of the 11 examined websites, only 4 published illegal advertisements. 4 advertisements have been clearly identified as scams and have then not been taken into consideration in the data analysis.

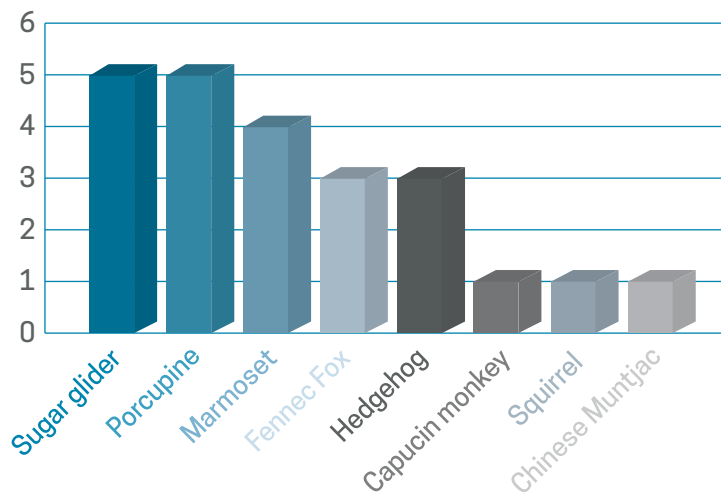


Figure 7. Number of individuals per species on online sale

Order	English name	Scientific name	Nr.
<b>Marsupial</b>	Sugar glider	Petaurus Breviceps	5
<b>Rodent</b>	Porcupine	Hystrix spp.	5
<b>Primate</b>	Marmoset	Callitrichidae	4
<b>Carnivore</b>	Fennec Fox	Vulpes zerda	3
<b>Eulipotyphla</b>	Hedgehog	Erinaceinae	3
<b>Primate</b>	Capucin monkey	Cebus capucinus	1
<b>Rodent</b>	Squirrel	Sciuridae	1
<b>Artiodactyla</b>	Chinese Muntjac	Muntiacus reevesi	1

Table 6. Number of online advertisements per species



### 2.5.2. Facebook groups/forums/websites

Three Facebook pages have been identified as belonging to groups specialised on exotic mammals: Exotic Mammal Trade (Europe), Exotic Animals for sale Europe and Exotische Dieren. The groups' purpose is to sell/buy exotic mammals and exchange information about their keeping and handling. Most of the members of the groups, which were not exclusively from Belgium, owned an exotic pet, all of them legal species. Two of the three groups explicitly mention that illegal trade is prohibited and it is not allowed to be discussed in the group.

The report's author simulated the intention to buy a Serval (*Leptailurus serval*) from members of one of these groups as a test, but we were told that this species is illegal to be kept or purchased in Belgium. The members of the group mentioned also that it's very hard to get an exotic mammal in or from Belgium.

Of the examined websites of pet shops, only one (Faunatech, based in UK) has been found to publish specific information about the selling of exotic mammals in Belgium; even if several of the offered species are forbidden in Belgium, this was not mentioned in the website.



Image by: AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection



# 3. DISCUSSION

On several occasions representatives of the Belgian government officially stated that the introduction of the Positive List has been beneficial, allowing for a drastic reduction of exotic mammal species traded. However, hard data quantifying this improvement was lacking. This study therefore for the first provides stakeholders with evidence-based insights in the size of the illegal trade of exotic mammals after the adoption of the positive list in Belgium.

According to the data collected by the Belgian FPS and by the rescue centers Natuurhulpcentrum and AAP, 22 cases of confiscations, corresponding to 92 animals, have been detected in Belgium within a period of 6 years (2009-2014), with an average of fewer than 4 cases ( 15 animals) per year.

Considering both the confiscations and the animals rescued for other reasons, the most frequently illegally kept species is the raccoon, with 46 individuals, followed by Barbary macaque with 14 individuals. These results demonstrate that the illegal trade of exotic mammals in Belgium after the final adoption of a positive list system is very limited.

Our data demonstrate also that only a limited number of illegal species needed to be rescued in Belgium because they were abandoned or voluntarily delivered (37 in total, with an average of 6 animals per year) hence demonstrating that the adoption of the positive list system did not cause the much feared increase in rescued animals.

The limited number of animals voluntarily delivered to rescue centers (average of 4 animals/year) also suggests that owners face less difficulty in keeping their pets when only the species for which the needs can be easily satisfied are available to be purchased.

Since the Belgian FPS only rarely control the online trade, we investigated 11 Belgian websites of private advertisements, three Facebook pages and several forums during 61 days. Our aim was to obtain an as complete picture of the exotic mammal's trade in Belgium as possible. 12 advertisements (6 per month) concerning illegal species, corresponding to 23 animals (11.5 animals per month) have been detected.

A recent study implemented in UK during three months (Blue Cross and Born Free Foundation, 2015) identified 322 advertisements selling one or more exotic mammals, with an average of 107 advertisements per month..

Another study on the online trade of exotic mammals in Germany discovered that at least 10,120 exotic mammals have been offered for sale between 2010 and 2014, with an average of 211 advertisements per month (Pro Wildlife, 2015). Like in UK, German legislation also prohibits only a few species through a negative list (Animal Welfare Act, 2006).

*The data collected by our study and the comparison with the results of similar studies implemented in other European countries that adopted negative lists of forbidden species, demonstrate that the adoption of the positive list system has been very effective in reducing the trade of exotic mammals in Belgium. Only the few species suitable for private husbandry are now traded and kept in the country, public awareness has increased and the public is well-informed on the species suitable to be kept as pets, then limiting illegal trade.*

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The presence of exotic, not domesticated mammals in the domestic environment has historically generated, and continues to generate, a significant and major threat for animal welfare, public and animal health and safety and the environment. Regardless of whether or not exotic mammals are wild-caught or captive bred, these animals possess highly specific behavior that is innate and related to the fact that they are wild, and not domesticated animals.

Understanding of housing requirements and environmental needs is important, but even when knowledge is available it is sometimes difficult to satisfy the specialized needs of some exotic species in the household environment.

A positive list allows pet keeping and trade of only those species that are suitable for private husbandry considering animal welfare, species conservation, and public health and safety concerns.

Belgium has been the first EU country to adopt a Positive List for mammals. Six years after its definitive adoption and implementation, the present report has analyzed the effectiveness of this legislation. The report provides evidence to back the Belgian government's official statement that the Positive List, combined with an important social control, efficiently regulated the number of animals illegally sold and kept in the country.

The presented data also clearly demonstrate that confiscations and rescue of illegally kept/sold exotic mammals are occasional and did not dramatically rise.

The investigation we made on the online trade further confirmed the situation observed by the government and the rescue centres: illegal trade unfortunately continues to exist, but is limited to a few cases. Illegal advertisements are quickly removed from websites, to avoid to be reported to the authorities by the public.

The present report indicates that, as stated by a published position of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, a positive list "represents a more manageable, proportionate and effective regulatory process and a less bureaucratic burden on enforcement agencies".

*The establishment and adoption of positive lists by the EU member states should be strongly encouraged, to improve animal welfare, reduce illegal trade and contain risks for human health, animal health and the environment.*

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# APPENDIX 1 – BELGIAN POSITIVE LIST (TRANSLATED VERSION)

English name	Scientific name
<b>Red-necked wallaby</b>	Macropus rufogriseus
<b>Dog</b>	Canis familiaris
<b>Cat</b>	Felis catus
<b>Ferret</b>	Mustela furio
<b>Donkey (domesticated version)</b>	Equus asinus
<b>Equus Hybrid (hybrid of donkey and horse)</b>	Equus asinus x Equus caballus
<b>Horse</b>	Equus caballus
<b>Hinny (Hybrid of horse and donkey)</b>	Equus caballus x Equus asinus
<b>Pig</b>	Sus scrofa
<b>Llama (Domesticated version)</b>	Lama glama
<b>Guanaco</b>	Lama guanicoe
<b>Alpaca (Domesticated version)</b>	Lama pacos
<b>Chital deer</b>	Axis axis
<b>Red deer</b>	Cervus elaphus
<b>Sika deer</b>	Cervus nippon
<b>Fallow deer</b>	Dama dama
<b>Domestic cow</b>	Bos taurus
<b>Water buffalo (Domesticated version)</b>	Bubalus bubalis
<b>Goat (Domesticated version)</b>	Capra hircus
<b>Alpine ibex</b>	Capra ibex
<b>Mountain sheep</b>	Ovis ammon
<b>Sheep (Domesticated version)</b>	Ovis aries
<b>Black-tailed prairie dog</b>	Cynomys ludovicianus
<b>Siberian chipmunk</b>	Tamias sibiricus
<b>Eastern chipmunk</b>	Tamias striatus
<b>Striped hamster</b>	Cricetulus barbarensis
<b>Golden hamster</b>	Mesocricetus auratus
<b>Campbell's dwarf hamster</b>	Phodopus campbelli
<b>Roborovski hamster</b>	Phodopus roborovskii
<b>Sjungarian hamster</b>	Phodopus sungorus
<b>Gerbils</b>	Gerbillus spec.
<b>Meriones</b>	Meriones spec.
<b>Acomys</b>	Acomys spec.
<b>Earasian harvest mouse</b>	Micromys minutus

English name	Scientific name
<b><i>African pygmy mouse</i></b>	Mus minutoides
<b><i>House mouse (bred)</i></b>	Mus musculus
<b><i>Brown rat (bred)</i></b>	Rattus norvegicus
<b><i>Long-tailed Chinchilla (bred)</i></b>	Chinchilla lanigera
<b><i>Guinea pig</i></b>	Cavia porcellus
<b><i>Patagonian mara</i></b>	Dolichotis patagonum
<b><i>Degu</i></b>	Octodon degus
<b><i>Rabbit</i></b>	Oryctolagus cuniculus



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Eurogroup for Animals  
6 rue des Patriotes  
B-1000 Brussels - Belgium

T : +32 (0)2 740 08 20  
F : +32 (0)2 740 08 29

[info@eurogroupforanimals.org](mailto:info@eurogroupforanimals.org)  
[www.eurogroupforanimals.org](http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org)

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