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## New training for conservation dogs in the fight against animal smuggling

(16.10.2018) Rare turtles, souvenirs made of ivory or jewelry from the horn of a rhinoceros: Animal smuggling is a billion dollar business and a great danger for many endangered species.

In order to stop smugglers, one puts more emphasis on species protection dogs, who sniff out animals or animal parts hidden in suitcases.

For the training of these "helpers on four paws" a new method was developed with the help of the Tiergarten Schönbrunn. "Until now, training had to be done with real animals or real ivory."



*Shepherd "Franzi" with the multi-track conditioning tool SOKKS®-CITES\**

Now we have made available materials such as ivory, feathers and reptile eggs so that their odor could be applied in an elaborate process to small tubes that dogs can now practice ", says Harald Schwammer, deputy zoo director.

The sniffer training with the help of the tubes has another big advantage: "If the dogs practice only with a whole piece of ivory, they will find it hard to track down a smaller

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dose such as an ivory chess piece in a suitcase. Especially at the beginning of the training, the small odorants are therefore an important tool.



*Harald Schwammer with a smuggled Egyptian spiny-tailed lizard ([Uromastyx aegyptia](#))*

Later, it should then be practiced with original material. "

Harald Schwammer, Alexander Gampl and Franz Taisser of TAIGA4 - Canine Conditioning see the areas of application very diverse: " Not only customs authorities, security companies and the executive can use these odor carriers in training, even in combat It can be very useful against the poaching of elephants in South Africa or the rhinos in Asia and Africa."

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