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## **Some aspects of the trade of squirrels in Thailand**

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Study on the trade of squirrel in Thailand was conducted by observing the trade of squirrels at Chatujak Weekend Market during July and November 2011. The export permits of squirrels from Thailand to foreign countries during 2009 to 2011 reported by Thailand CITES Management Authority were reviewed and the statistics were analyzed.

In 2009, about 610 heads of Himalayan Striped Squirrel (*Tamiops macclelandi*), Mountain Red-bellied Squirrel (*Callosciurus erythraeus*) and Belly-banded Squirrel (*C. flavimanus*) were exported to Qatar, UAE, Italy, Brunei Darussalam and Germany. In 2010 only 3 species of *Callosciurus* spp. were exported and the Variable Squirrel (*C. finlaysoni*) composed more than half of the total 1900 heads. Exported routes were in Middle East, South Africa and Italy. And in 2011, Variable Squirrels still retain their popularity in the market, while there were some demand for ground squirrels in Qatar, Italy and South Africa too. Data from January to September 2011 showed that about 895 heads were exported to foreign countries.

According to Thailand's Wild Animals Reservation and Protection Act (B.E. 2535), squirrels in the genus *Callosciurus*, except the white phase of variable squirrel (*C. finlaysoni finlaysoni*) and Prevost's squirrel (*C. prevostii*), are not protected and not regulated by CITES. But flying squirrels in the genus *Hylopetes* and *Pteromyscus* were protected by Thai law. Some species such as *C. notatus*, *C. finlaysoni*, and *C. caniceps* were reported to be pests in the orchard, coconut plantation and cultivated areas. The preliminary survey on the trade of squirrels at Chatujak Weekend Market reported 4 species of Grey-bellied Squirrel (*C. caniceps*), Variable Squirrel (*C. finlaysoni*), Himalayan Striped Squirrel (*Tamiops macclelandi*) and Indochinese Ground Squirrel (*Menetes berdmorei*) sold in the market and the last 3 species were sold in higher number than the first species.