



## Not-so-special mail

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The number of endangered British species identified on marshland in West Thurrock in Essex that is to be turned into a warehouse and lorry park for Royal Mail. Buglife says only one other site in the UK supports more 'Red Data Book' species.

## In the flames

An animal rescue team in Indonesia treated more than 40 orangutans for respiratory problems and burns towards the end of 2006 following fires that drove them from their forest home. More at [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)



Picture credit

# NEWS OF THE EARTH

Everything you need to know about what's happening to wildlife around the world

## TESTING TIMES



**Captive-bred macaques in Vietnam, destined for animal testing in the UK, endure shocking conditions – and now wild populations are being illegally targeted.**

### LONG-TAILED MACAQUES

destined for the Cambridgeshire laboratories of Huntingdon Life Sciences are being bred in factory farms in Vietnam and may also have been taken from the wild.

In 1995, the UK enacted a ban on the import of wild-caught primates after the high level of suffering and the impact on wild populations that the trade caused was revealed. This forced UK animal testing companies to source captive-bred animals, and they have turned to countries such as Vietnam to supply the 3,000 primates used each year.

An investigation by campaigning group BUAV has revealed that a captive-breeding facility called Nafovanny, the

largest of its type in the world, with a capacity of 30,000 animals, is keeping macaques in conditions that fall short of standards outlined by the International Primatological Society (IPS).

The macaques are held in bare, rusty cages, receive little stimulation, and infants are taken from their mothers six months before IPS says they should be.

BUAV investigators tracked the Nafovanny macaques to a smaller satellite farm, where the monkeys were kept in even worse conditions, with no attempt at alleviating boredom.

These animals, says BUAV,

appeared to be wild-caught individuals. They cowered when investigators approached the cages – an indication that they had been taken from the wild.

Nafovanny literature implies that wild macaques are important, and it plans a farm in Cambodia, where, it says, "most macaques are born and found to quench the research demand."

Huntingdon Life Sciences declined to confirm its suppliers, while the Home Office declined to say if individual breeding centres are licensed, though it said that Nafovanny was kept under "constant review". *Hugh Warwick*

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The number of hours required to transport macaques from Vietnam to the UK, according to Nafovanny.

### BACKGROUND

- » The number of procedures using non-human primates in 2005 was 4,650, a rise of 440 (11 per cent) from 2004. The number of animals used for these procedures was 3,120, up 320 (12 per cent) on 2004.
- » The most commonly used species are macaques. The most common tests carried out on these monkeys are toxicological, accounting for 77 per cent of procedures. A further 17 per cent are used for medical research.
- » The total number of scientific procedures carried out on animals in 2005 was just under 2.9 million – an increase of 1.4 per cent on 2004. Rats, mice, birds and fish account for 97 per cent of these experiments.

Picture credit

### TAKE ACTION

BUAV's website has further details of the investigation.

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