UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

For Release to PM's February 19, 1968 Carroll 343-5634

FISH AND WILDLIFE IMPORTATIONS NEARLY 29,000,000 LAST YEAR, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Nearly 28,000,000 live fish and more than 800,000 other animals were imported into the United States last year, the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife reported today. This is the first time that virtually complete records have been obtained at ports of entry.

Imports included 27,759,332 fish, 30,157 shellfish, 405,134 reptiles, 203,189 birds, 137,697 amphibians and 74,304 mammals.

Federal regulations effective in 1966 require the reporting of incoming live fish and wildlife. The federal government seeks to prevent infectious diseases such as hoof and mouth disease and harmful species such as fruit bats and mongooses from entering the United States.

The regulations do not place limits on exotic or rare species, and 1967 imports included steppe eagles, pygmy hippopotamuses and giant tortoises.

Live fish importations were mostly tropical fish for home aquariums. Many of the shellfish were seed clams from Canada for replanting on New England tidal flats.

The reptiles included large numbers of lizards, snakes and turtles--species frequently favored as pets and often valuable in scientific experiments.

Frogs and toads, used primarily in educational research, comprised most of the amphibians. Of the mammals, 62,526 were primates. Over half the primates were rhesus monkeys from Southeast Asia, many of which are used in medical research.

The Port of New York is the principal port of entry, followed in importance by Miami, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. These four ports had over 90 percent of the importations.

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