



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* FLORIDA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

## **Man Convicted of Lying to Federal Agents During International Wildlife Trafficking Investigation**

Miami, Florida -- A Texas man pled guilty today to knowingly and willfully making a materially false, fictitious, and fraudulent statement and representation to Special Agents of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service during a criminal investigation into international trafficking of primates into the United States.

Gary Tucker, 64, of Alice, Texas, pled guilty to the charge during a hearing in Fort Lauderdale before U.S. District Judge William P. Dimitrouleas. In connection with his guilty plea, Tucker admitted the following: He agreed to be interviewed by Special Agents of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) about potential illegal trafficking of wildlife. During the interview, agents asked Tucker about his involvement in the procurement and importation to the United States of long-tailed macaques -- small non-human primates regularly employed in scientific research -- from Southeast Asia. *See included image.* In particular, agents asked Tucker whether he or others working for his employer, Orient BioResource Center (OBRC), prepared or submitted to OBRC any audits or reports concerning visits to supplier sites in Cambodia. Tucker responded to those questions in the negative, that is, that no supplier site visits were memorialized in any written audit reports to OBRC. In fact, as Tucker well knew, preparation and submission of site visit reports was a standard procedure at OBRC.

According to court documents, the existence of site visit reports or audits was material to the on-going investigation into the trafficking of the primates, whose possession, sale, export and import is highly regulated by the international community and the United States under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, to which the United States is a party, and the U.S. Endangered Species Act, Title 16, United States Code, Section 1538, et seq. Congress has tasked the USFWS to administer and enforce the provisions of the Treaty.

Sentencing in the matter has been set before Judge Dimitrouleas on October 13, at 1:30 pm in Fort Lauderdale. Tucker faces a possible prison sentence of up to five years in jail, a term of supervised release thereafter of up to three years, and a criminal fine of up to \$250,000.

Acting U.S. Attorney Juan Antonio Gonzalez of the Southern District of Florida and Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey Burke of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), Special Investigations Unit made the announcement.

USFWS investigated the case with assistance from Special Agent Jason Molina of Homeland Security Investigations in Newark, New Jersey. Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Watts-FitzGerald of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida prosecuted the case.

You may find related court documents and information on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at [www.flsd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov) or at <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>, under case numbers 21-cr-20263.

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**Topic(s):**

Wildlife

**Component(s):**

USAO - Florida, Southern

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