

By Travis M. Andrews

*Watch this if you've ever pondered how many parrots can fit in a van
with a lion cub — in Ukraine*

*Якщо ви коли-небудь замислювалися, скільки папуг може
міститися у фургоні з левом, то дивіться – в Україні*

*Українські прикордонники вилучили у громадянина Туреччини маленького левеня, якого
той ховав у фургоні з папугами і намагався незаконно вивезти за межі України.*

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/03/24/watch-this-if-youve-ever-pondered-how-many-parrots-can-fit-in-a-van-with-a-lion-cub-in-ukraine/?utm_term=.478362107e

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It's weird enough to find a van carrying thousands of parrots; weirder still to find hidden among them a lion cub.

A video released by the State Border Service of Ukraine showed Ukrainian border guards searching a large white van at a Black Sea trading port near Odessa on Thursday. Painted on its side were the images of several parrots flying in a blue sky, accompanied by the bold red words "Live Animal Transport." A Turkish national drove the van, which carried two other passengers, according to a news release accompanying the video.

Inside were parrots, 2,245 of them, according to authorities, who said they actually counted them. They were all packed into crates and strapped to the van's interior by orange harnesses. Some of the birds flapped their wings. Others chirped aloud.

Among them, though, was a small, furry lion cub. The birds' natural predator was in a plastic cage, which authorities said was hidden under a blanket and a sports bag.

The one-month-old lion appeared docile. In the video, the cub looked around, as if curious about the ruckus.

It was being illegally smuggled, Ukraine's state border service reported, adding that the smugglers would be prosecuted.

In the video, a mustachioed man played with the golden cub, which pranced around like a house cat before settling into the man's arms. After the video was shot, the lion was sent to a zoo in Odessa, border officials said.

It's unclear why the lion in Ukraine was being smuggled.