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8 Endangered Tiger Skins Recovered

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The remains of Amur tigers fetch a high price from practitioners of traditional medicine in neighboring China.

Police in the Pirmorye region have opened a criminal case after seizing the skins of eight endangered Amur tigers.

Authorities discovered the tiger hides along with other animal parts and a large quantity of ginseng at a home in the settlement of Asenev on Aug. 24, RIA-Novosti reported.

They also discovered 150 rounds of rifle ammunition.

Police opened eight cases of illegal hunting, which carries a maximum sentence of six months in prison.

A local resident, who is believed to have bought the hides from across the region, has been charged with illegal possession of a firearm. He faces up to eight years in prison if convicted.

The find is the latest this year in a series of seizures of tiger parts, which fetch a high-price from practitioners of traditional medicine in neighboring China.

Regional authorities said earlier a "large haul" of tiger remains had been seized this year thanks to close coordination between conservationists and law enforcement agencies, including six hides that were seized from a resident of Nakhodka.

Authorities and conservationists said after a meeting in Vladivostok last week that poachers kill 30 to 50 tigers every year.

Experts have called for increasing penalties for poaching and smuggling the remains across national borders, regardless of the value of the items concerned.

The Amur tiger, which is native to Russia's Primorye and Khabarovsk regions, is the largest tiger subspecies. Only about 450 individual tigers are thought to remain in the wild.

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