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Tiger Cub Found Shot in Russia's Far East

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A tiger cub was shot dead and abandoned by the roadside in Russia's Far East, a news report said.

A member of a bike tourists' group that found the dead cub said the "baby tiger was probably trying to hunt, leaped out on the road, and there were people," the Kommersant daily reported Sunday.

"They shot it out of surprise," the group member, who was identified only by his first name, Yevgeny, was quoted as saying.

The animal was likely killed by a member of a logging crew whose truck was parked a short distance away, though a shooting by poachers was also possible, he said, Kommersant reported.

The cub appeared to have been killed mere hours before the bike tourists passed by last week,

Kommersant reported.

"Blood was trickling from under the tiger cub's head; it was clear that we couldn't do anything for it," Yevgeny was quoted as saying.

When the cyclists passed the same spot again, riding back to the city of Khabarovsk on the return leg of their tour this weekend, the cub's body was already gone, Kommersant reported.

The cyclists said they had reported the incident to the Emergency Situations Ministry, but its officials said they did not deal with shootings of animals, Kommersant reported.

Amur tigers are highly endangered animals, of whom only a few hundred are estimated to remain, most of them in the Russian Far East.

A few tigers have been personally released by President Vladimir Putin from an animal care facility into the wild, and have since made headlines by going on rampages in Russia's Far East and in China, attacking domestic animals.

One of the tigers released by Putin also recently killed and ate a bear, news agency Interfax reported last month.

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