



**IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY  
AND  
AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**MAN CAUGHT WITH 22 STAR TORTOISES AT WOODLANDS CHECKPOINT**

On 23 June 2016, at about 1pm, a Singapore-registered car driven by a 49-year-old male Singaporean was referred for further checks upon arrival at the Woodlands Checkpoint. During the course of inspection, the checkpoint officers uncovered 22 live star tortoises kept in a bag, placed amongst other bags of groceries in the car boot.



**22 star tortoises found in a car boot (Photo credit: AVA)**

2. The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) was immediately alerted to the detection. The Singaporean and the tortoises were handed over to AVA. While the

Singaporean is assisting AVA with investigations, the star tortoises are under the care of the Wildlife Reserves Singapore.

3. Star tortoises are protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), for which Singapore is a signatory. Under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act, the import and export/re-export of star tortoises require CITES permits. Offenders in violation of this Act can be fined up to \$50,000 (not to exceed an aggregate of S\$500,000) per animal, and/or face a jail term of up to two years.

4. Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's security. The security checks are critical to our nation's security. The ICA will continue to conduct security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contrabands.

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