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News Release

Catch of the Day: CBP Snares Sea Cucumber Smugglers in Calexico

CALEXICO, Calif. — U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Calexico East Port of Entry (POE) successfully intercepted a traveler attempting to smuggle over 50 pounds of sea cucumbers concealed within a vehicle into the United States during a routine inspection.

On the morning of August 21, CBP officers encountered a 55-year-old woman driving a 2014 sedan applying for admission into the U.S. from Mexico. During the inspection, a CBP officer opened the trunk of the vehicle and discovered what looked like dried sea cucumbers and referred the driver and vehicle for further inspection.

In the inspection area, a CBP agriculture specialist confirmed the items as dried sea cucumbers, and 53.79 pounds were found in the trunk of the vehicle.

"This interception highlights the dedication and vigilance of our CBP officers and agriculture specialists in protecting our borders and natural resources," stated Roque Caza, Area Port Director of Calexico. "Smuggling attempts like this pose a threat not only to our country's security but also to the environmental balance."

Sea cucumbers are subject to strict regulations to prevent over-harvesting and ensure the sustainability of marine ecosystems. Smuggling such quantities not only violates these regulations but also disrupts environmental conservation efforts.

CBP urges all travelers and importers to familiarize themselves with U.S. regulations regarding wildlife and plant products to avoid legal repercussions and support conservation efforts.

CBP seized the sea cucumbers and turned them over to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[The USFWS Office of Law Enforcement](#) regulates all international movement of wildlife in, out and through the United States in order to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Follow the Director of CBP's San Diego Field Office on Twitter at [@DFOSanDiegoCA](#) for breaking news, current events, human interest stories, and photos.

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control, and protection of our nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.