

# CITES news - Prague



## Czech Environmental Inspectorate



During the inspection of the house of a songbird keeper CEI inspectors found 6 *Serinus serinus*, 3 *Carduelis carduelis*, 2 *Carduelis cannabina*, 1 *Carduelis spinus* and 1 *Carduelis chloris*, all without rings. The keeper did not possess the permission to keep them (which he needs according to the Czech national law) and declared he bought the birds from unknown people at the local bird market. Later he sent a statement according to which he found these birds injured in nature and tried to cure them. After presenting him a statement from a rescue centre, according to which the birds were not injured, he brought his final version: the birds were found by his neighbour in nature not injured but weakened by starvation and they could not fly (13 songbirds of 5 species found in two months!). The man was fined 32.000 CZK (app. 1200 Euros).

Just a year before this accident, the same man had been fined by CEI for offering 2 *Serinus serinus* without rings and without permission on local bird market for 100 CZK (app. 4 Euros) each. In both cases all songbirds were seized.

In the Czech Republic there are two main non-raptor bird species taken from nature: offsprings of Corvidae (kept as pets) and adults of Fringillidae.

Some of the methods used by Czech keepers of Fringillidae:

Using of undivided rings with too large inner diameter (removable from the leg of an adult); using of one permission for several birds with same ring numbers kept on different places; putting rings of proper size on young in the wild and then covering the nest with a net so juveniles cannot fly away, but parents can feed them and after that, when young have fledged, registering them as bred in captivity; using of false Netherlands and Belgian rings.... Perhaps the worst problem is the easiness of obtaining permission to keep songbirds.

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