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- DENR seizes illegally collected wildlife plants in Quezon province

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About ₱300,000 worth of illegally collected Philippine bantigue, a plant species popularly used in making bonsai, has been seized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Quezon province.

A composite team led by the DENR's Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade (Task Force POGI) confiscated 34 sacks of threatened bantigue (*Pemphis acidula*) earlier this month.

Pedrito Fabros, 39, who is a bonsai trader, was apprehended in a residential house located at Barangay Umiray in General Nakar town, Quezon province.

Confiscated were at least six bags containing freshly cut bantigue stems, and the rest containing dried stems used as raw materials for accessories and firewood.

Under the Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, collection, selling and transport of bantigue is prohibited.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said the recent operation and seizure of valuable wildlife species only showed that the government remains resolute in its fight against poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

He assured that the DENR will continue to go after wildlife traders, who are pushing some wild animals and plants to the brink of extinction.

“We will continue to hunt for perpetrators who use the natural resources for illegal purposes and for their own selfish interests,” Cimatu said.

DENR, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau, has already filed a case against Fabros for violating the provisions of RA 9147. He may face six years imprisonment and fine amounting up to ₱200,000.

The agency is also looking at the possibility of filing a case against Fabros for violating Presidential Decree No. 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/08/25/denr-seizes-illegally-collected-wildlife-plants-in-quezon-province/>