

# No Bats or Pangolins Sold in Wuhan Wet Market: Oxford Research



Neither bats nor pangolins were being sold in Wet Markets in Wuhan when the [CCP \(Chinese Communist Party\) virus](#) pandemic started, a study by Oxford University found.

Chinese officials have claimed the virus, which causes COVID-19, originated outside the country, but it is widely believed to have come from a top-level laboratory in Wuhan, where the initial cases were detected, or from a seafood market near the lab.

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in March that the organization [hadn't found the source of the virus](#), and that the report it had produced, which said the virus "very likely" had an animal host, didn't adequately analyze other theories.

According to the Oxford University, bats and pangolins—the two main

suspects in the natural development theory—had an alibi.

The University said its Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WILDCRU) happened to have been working with its China-based colleagues in gathering data collected from across Wuhan's wet markets through May 2017 and November 2019 to study a different disease.

The study put the team "in the right place at the right time to document the wild animals sold in these markets in the lead up to the pandemic," Professor David Macdonald, director of WILDCRU said in a [statement](#).

The study, published by [Nature](#) journal on Tuesday, said the team documented 47,381 individuals from 38 species sold as pets or for human consumption, including Badgers, raccoon dogs, hedgehogs, peacocks, and reptiles, but not bats or pangolins.

"Bats are actually rarely consumed in Central China, where market photos generally depict Indonesia. Pangolin trade is still a significant issue in other Chinese cities and trading nodes, but not in Wuhan," Macdonald said.

Questions around the origin of the CCP virus have been growing recently, with a number of scientists who had dismissed the lab leak theory having now [backtracked](#) their statements.

U.S. President Joe Biden said on May 26 that he wanted the Intelligence Community to [produce a report](#) on the origin of the CCP virus in 90 days.

Downing Street has also said that the WHO needs to "[explore all possible theories](#)," although an [ex-intelligence chief](#) said the organization is "a lost cause" in his estimation.

Last month, 18 international researchers signed [a letter](#) pushing for a "proper investigation" into the virus origin.

U.S. epidemiologist Ralph Baric is among the signatories.

Baric and Dr. [Shi Zhengli](#)—a senior virologist at the [Wuhan Institute of Virology](#) nicknamed “Bat Lady” for her research on bat coronaviruses—are both among the authors of a paper published in 2015 on bat coronaviruses. Baric is also one of the scientists that classified the CCP virus and named it “SARS-CoV-2.”

*Zachary Stieber contributed to this report.*

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