

Sierra bear poachers face felony charges

By AP

Two men arrested in possession of bear claws and gall bladders will be arraigned in El Dorado County Superior Court on felony charges.

Warden Mark Michilizzi said that Peter Vitali and Arthur Blake were arrested April 20 in the Eldorado National Forest.

The two possessed 20 large bear claws and three bear gall bladders.

The investigation suggested the men recently had killed a mother bear and two cubs. All had their livers and gall bladders removed.

At the time bear season was closed.

The bile inside gall bladders is believed by some to have medicinal properties and is sold on the black market.

Under state law it's a felony to sell, purchase or possess for sale any part of a bear.

The pair will be arraigned June 4.