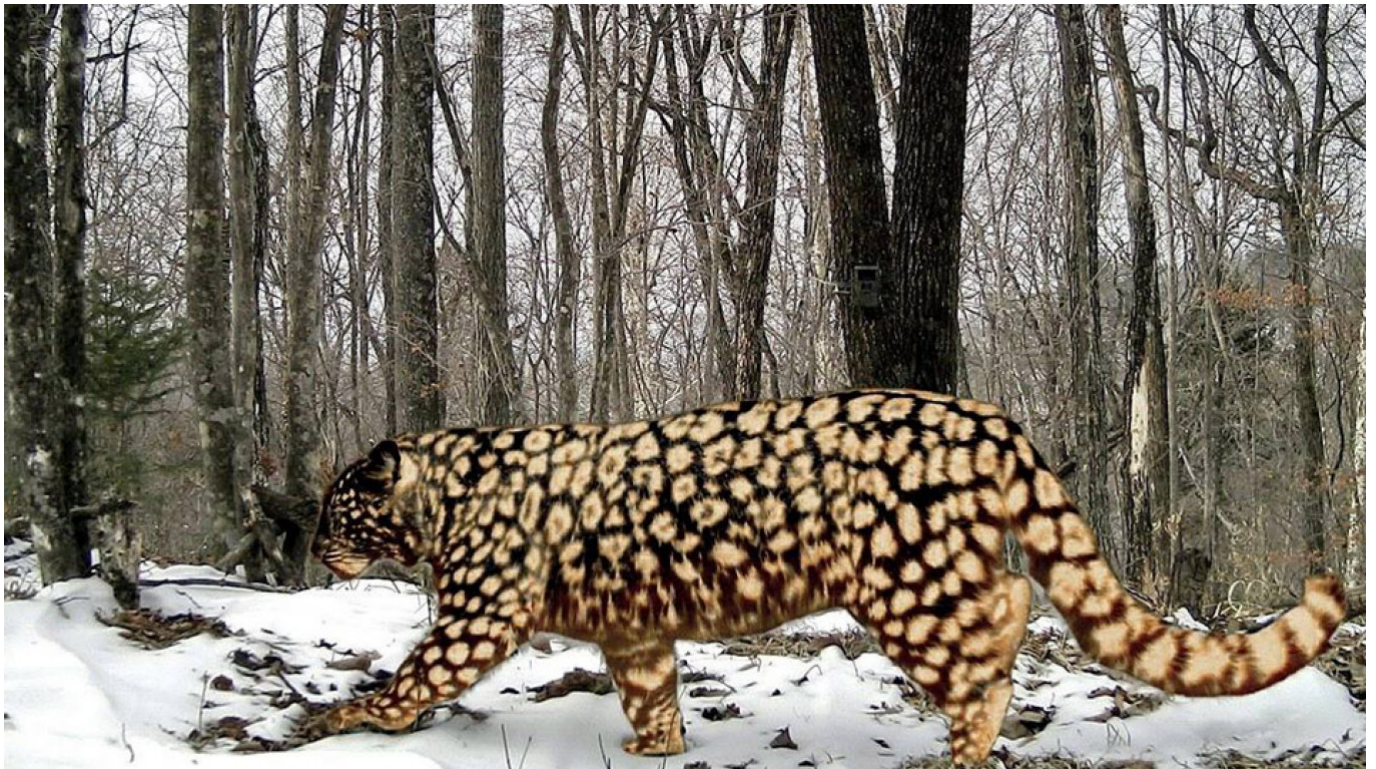


April Fool's Day, Russian Style

April 01, 2019

A selection of the best April Fool's Day stories, announcements and pranks Russia has seen over the years.



amurleo / Facebook

Amur Leopard Photoshop

Russian social media was abuzz this April 1 when 'Leopard Land' national park [published](#) a post on Facebook claiming its staff had spotted an Amur Leopard with an inverted coat pattern: black with yellow spots.

"Publications about this mutation in Amur Leopards had not yet appeared in scientific literature when scientists discovered this surprise," the national park wrote.

Russia reclaims Alaska

In 2016, the Gazeta.ru news website [reported](#) that a group of international lawyers with ties to the Russian government were trying to find legal irregularities in the United States' 1867 purchase of Alaska in order to reclaim Alaska as Russian land. The prank quickly spread across

Russian social media.

Dial 'three' for elections interference information

Two years ago, Russia's Foreign Ministry [made](#) a Facebook post with a fake voicemail for Russian diplomatic missions. It offered callers a few different services, including ordering "a call from a Russian diplomat to your political competitors" or using "Russian hacking services."

"Dial 'three' for elections interference information," the voicemail recommended.

Embed:

Not going anywhere

In 2014, Pavel Durov, the founder of Russia's Vkontakte (VK) social media network, [faked](#) his resignation after the company had been planning to elect a new CEO. VK's board of directors had been scheduled to convene on April 1 to elect a new CEO. But Durov, who announced his resignation that day in a farewell letter published on his personal VK page, said the move had been a prank.

"To those who thought I was actually resigning, happy April Fool's," Durov said in the post alongside a picture of a smiling dog.

Buzz off

The same year as Durov's fake resignation, Yandex, Russia's most popular search engine, [greeted](#) users with a realistic-looking fly that scurried around their computer screens as they tried to use the site.

Hot wheels

In 2014, The Moscow Times [published](#) a story claiming that then-President Dmitry Medvedev was to arrive in London for the G20 summit in a specially designed ZiL limousine that a Kremlin official said dwarfed U.S. President Barack Obama's \$300,000 armor-plated limousine.

No day off

Radio Russia in 2001 reported that the Russian parliament was considering a proposal to declare April 1 a public holiday.

"Telephone jokes, absurd tasks for managers, warnings that the power, light or heat is to be cut off and other practical jokes are much more extravagant than on other days. As a result, expert analysis shows, industrial efficiency in Russia falls," the report explained. By declaring the day a national holiday, efficiency would be maintained.

Alcoholic snacks

News about alcoholic snack bars appeared in the state-run TASS news agency in 1994, *Govorit Moskva* [reported](#). TASS reported that one of Russia's alcohol-producing companies was planning to make alcoholic chocolate bars. They were expected to compete with Mars and Snickers and to have three flavors – lemon, coconut and pickled gherkin.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/04/01/april-fools-day-russian-style-a65039>