

Six arrested for pangolin skin possession

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Page no: !

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Confiscated pangolin skins on display during the 2017 commemoration of World Wildlife Day in Windhoek. Photo: Francois Lottering/Nampa

LAW enforcement agents last week cracked down on six individuals who were found in possession of pangolin skin.

The weekly wildlife crime statistics report, which is jointly compiled by the ministry of environment and the Namibian Police, said four of the five new cases registered between 10 and 16 February involved the illegal possession of pangolin skin.

Two suspects were arrested at Outapi on separate incidents of pangolin skin possession, while two suspects were jointly nabbed in Okahandja for illegally possessing one pangolin skin.

At Otjiwarongo, police officers arrested two more suspects for the possession of one pangolin skin, and also impounded a vehicle from the pair.

The suspects are all Namibian nationals.

In 2019, the pangolin was internationally declared as the most trafficked animal on earth and Namibia has positioned itself as a global leader in research on the nocturnal mammal.

Meanwhile two Zambian and one Angolan were arrested at Katima Mulilo on Saturday for contravening the Arms and Ammunition Act.

The report detailed that the trio was nabbed for possession of ammunition without a licence when the police seized 10 rounds of ammunition from them. No firearms were seized.

Last week's wildlife crime report did not record any arrests for rhino or elephant poaching or trafficking.

However, all five of the court case appearances involving charges for contravening the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act involved rhino poaching or rhino products.