



## Let every scale count

World Pangolin Day kicked off with a bang on 19 February, with Namibia hosting a sizeable number of pangolins.

0 0 0

[Submit a response](#)

22 February 2022 | [Youth](#)

“The youth are our future and it is important people are familiar with pangolins before they are poached to extinction.” - Kelsey Prediger. Jeanette Diergaardt



Photo contributed



Photo contributed



Photo contributed



Photo contributed



Photo contributed



Photo contributed



Photo contributed

As you are reading this article, a pangolin is most likely being poached and its protective scales are advertised on the internet. According to an article published by the World Wildlife Fund, a pangolin is being poached every three minutes. Being one of the most poached animals in the world, it is probably not enough to dedicate only one day to the cause of saving pangolins.

In Namibia, pangolin poaching has been on the rise since 2015. On average there have been 30 live confiscations per year, 60 skins/carcasses seized per year and over a 100 arrests per year over the last four years.

According to Kelsey Prediger, the founder of the Pangolin Conservation and Research Foundation, PCRf, pangolins can be found where there is more than 250 mm of rain recorded per year. The specific numbers of the ground pangolin are not known, due to limited research. "It is also a sensitive subject given their status and high level of trafficking," said Prediger.

"The youth are our future and it is important people are familiar with pangolins before they are poached to extinction."

Every February, Pangolin Day is celebrated in the third week. Celebrated seems like the wrong word, as there is nothing celebratory about the unnecessary demise of these scaly, curled-up mammals.

The years 2019 and 2020 saw a massive decline in pangolin numbers. Their meat is eaten in Asia as a delicacy and their scales are believed to treat ailments like arthritis and asthma, although there is no scientific proof of that. The Americans are believed to use the scales as fashion accessories in belts, handbags and shoes.

These scaly mammals are protected under the highest international laws but their species has seen a decline of more than one million over the last decade.

There are eight species in the world, four of which can be found in Africa. In Namibia specifically, Temminck's ground pangolin, or *Smutsia temminckii*, is found. Pangolins are listed as an Appendix One species on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora. And pangolins are listed as vulnerable in Namibia. "Alive or dead, no pangolin parts may be captured, transported, kept or traded."

Guidelines when finding a captive pangolin

1. Free the animal as carefully as possible.
2. Transport the animal in a secure box.
3. Prepare a room for the captive pangolin. There must be a dish of room-temperature water and a rehydration solution. Provide a blanket. Remove furniture, as the animal is a compulsive curler.
4. Curled for 10-15 minutes? Turn to side.
5. Uncurled? Let the pangolin stretch and walk, but not too far.
6. Once the animal has settled, perform basic assessment.
7. Fill in a report card.
8. Call the Pangolin Hotline 081 413 2214

For more information, scan the QR code to the full Responders Manual

<https://n-c-e.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/First%20Responders%20Manual%20-%20African%20Ground%20Pangolin.pdf>

Don't be left out

On 19 February the Namibian Pangolin Working Group launched a writing campaign that will close on 30 June. If you are a secondary school learner, you can take part in the writing competition. More information can be found at [n-c-e.org](http://n-c-e.org) .

Visual artists can bring all their artistic prowess to the table in the visual arts segment of the competition, which will be coordinated by the Namibia Arts Association.

0 0 0