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Four bust at North West mall trying to sell pangolin for R250 000

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Four people have been arrested for attempting to sell a pangolin at a North West mall.
Supplied

- Four people have been arrested for trying to sell a pangolin for R250 000.
- They were arrested at a North West mall while attempting to find a buyer.

- **The pangolin was found in their car and taken to safety.**
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Four people have been arrested for attempting to sell a pangolin at a North West mall.

The Hawks swooped on the four people - aged between 33 and 59-years-old - in Mahikeng on Friday while they were attempting to sell the endangered animal for R250 000.

Pangolins are under threat from illegal trafficking networks and considered one of the world's most smuggled mammals.

Conservationists estimated that around 100 000 pangolins were smuggled each year. They are considered a delicacy in some Asian cultures and also used in traditional medicine, despite being protected under an international treaty.

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The Hawks' Serious Organised Crime Investigation Unit responded to a tip-off about the alleged wildlife smugglers, who were reportedly looking for a buyer for the pangolin, said Hawks spokesperson Captain Tlangelani Rikhotso.

"The suspects were arrested at the Crossing Mall in Mahikeng, where the pangolin was found in the suspects' vehicle. The vehicle was seized for further investigation," said Rikhotso.

The pangolin had been taken to a place of safety, said Rikhotso.

The four suspects are due to appear at the Mmabatho Magistrate's Court on Monday. They face charges of wildlife trafficking under the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act.