



NEWS CRIME AND COURTS

Police arrest man for possession of endangered species, including pangolins



A man from Lesotho was arrested for possession of the endangered species. Photo: SAPS

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Cape Town - A Lesotho national is expected to appear in the Ganyesa Magistrate's Court in the North West on Monday for possession of [endangered](#) species.

Police arrested the middle-aged man on Friday morning.

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Provincial police spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Amanda Funani said a crime intelligence-driven operation was conducted by members of the Vryburg K9 Unit.

“The suspect was arrested after intelligence gathered about possession of endangered species in Tlakgameng village near Ganyesa outside Vryburg was operationalised.

“During the operation, a search was conducted in a house at Tlakgameng, leading to the discovery of two pangolins, two dead rock pythons and two dead monkeys.

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“As a result, the suspect was arrested after failing to give a reasonable explanation for the possession.

“He is expected to appear in the Ganyesa Magistrates' Court on Monday, February 13, 2023, for contravention of Section 57(1) of the National Environmental Management Bio-Diversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004),” Funani added.

According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), pangolins are the most trafficked mammal in the world.

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The eight species of pangolin, four in Africa and four in Asia, are under threat.

“Over the past decade, over a million pangolins have been illegally taken from the [wild](#) to feed demand in China and Vietnam. Their meat is considered a delicacy, while their scales are used in traditional Chinese medicine as they are believed to treat a range of ailments, from asthma to rheumatism and arthritis,” the organisation said.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), two of the African species of pangolin are considered vulnerable and two are endangered.

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Of the Asian species, one is endangered while the other three are critically endangered.

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