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## **‘Pangolin dealer’ intercepted and arrested while on his way to sell endangered animal in Limpopo**



A 59-year-old man was arrested in Limpopo as he was allegedly on his way to sell a pangolin valued at R150 000. Photo: Hawks

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**Pretoria - A man was arrested in Limpopo for possession of a [pangolin](#), valued at R150 000, while he was on his way to sell the endangered animal.**

Spokesperson for the Hawks in Limpopo, Captain Matimba Maluleke, said the 59-year-old “pangolin dealer” was arrested at Gravelotte, near Tzaneen.

The operation to nab suspects on Wednesday involved several police units and the Hoedspruit Farmwatch.

“The team received a tip-off about a suspect who was allegedly on the way to sell a pangolin in Hoedspruit. Without any waste of time, the team followed up on the information, and a suspicious vehicle was spotted in Gravelotte,” Maluleke narrated.



A 59-year-old man was arrested in Limpopo as he was allegedly on his way to sell a pangolin valued at R150 000. Photo: Hawks

“Upon stopping and searching the suspicious vehicle, the team found a pangolin valued at R150 000 hidden in the boot, inside a bag.

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“The suspect failed to produce a permit for being in possession of a pangolin, and was immediately placed under arrest,” he said.

The 59-year-old was charged for illegal dealing in endangered species.



A 59-year-old man was arrested in Limpopo as he was on his way to sell a pangolin valued at R150 000. Photo: Hawks

Last year, two men aged 37 and 52, one a police constable, were charged with illegal dealing in pangolin and the contravention of the [National Environmental Management-Biodiversity \(Nemba\) Act](#).

At the time, Gauteng spokesperson for the Hawks, Captain Ndivhuwo Mulamu, said the duo was appearing before the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court.

"Authorities followed up on intelligence received regarding an illegal trade of a pangolin in the Cleveland area, central Johannesburg, on Friday," said Mulamu.

"An intelligence-driven operation by the Hawks' serious organised crime investigation in Germiston and Johannesburg, together with the Benoni K9, was conducted in Cyrildene where they intercepted and positively identified suspects'

white Toyota Verso with two occupants, reportedly on their way to meet with the pangolin potential buyer.”

On searching the suspects’ vehicle, the officers discovered that the Toyota Verso was registered to the SAPS, and attached to Mamelodi East.

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