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R200 000 pangolin sale: Four arrested while selling endangered animals at Mahikeng Mall



Four men were arrested by the Hawks while they were selling two pangolins for R200 000 at Mahikeng Mall. Picture: Hawks

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Pretoria - At least four people have been arrested by the Hawks in North West while they were selling two [pangolins](#) at a mall.

Spokesperson for the Hawks in North West, Captain Tlangelani Rikhotso, said the two pangolins were being sold for R200 000.

“Members of the Hawks’ serious organised crime investigation arrested four suspects aged between 29 and 45 in Mahikeng on 30 May 2023, following their attempt to sell two pangolins for R200 000,” said Rikhotso.

“The team was following up on information regarding the suspects who were allegedly looking for a buyer for the pangolins. The quartet was cornered at Mahikeng Mall where they were found in possession of the endangered species.”



Four men were arrested by the Hawks while they were selling two pangolins for R200 000 at Mahikeng Mall. Photo: Hawks

She said the four are set to appear before the Mahikeng Magistrate's Court on Wednesday, where they will be facing charges of contravention of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act.

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"Meanwhile, the pangolins have been taken to a wildlife veterinary hospital," according to the Hawks.



Four men were arrested by the Hawks while they were selling two pangolins for R200 000 at Mahikeng Mall. 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 Act.

At the time, Gauteng spokesperson for the Hawks, Captain Ndivhuwo Mulamu, said the duo were 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.

IOL