



FACTS OF THE TRADE.

There are 8 species of pangolin worldwide, 4 in Asia and 4 in Africa. All species of pangolin are severely affected by illegal trade and poaching. **Pangolin are currently recognized as**

the most illegally traded mammal on earth and are under severe threat of extinction.

In the last 10 years, it is estimated that over 1 million pangolins have been poached out of the wild. The decline in Asian pangolin numbers has resulted in the African species being targeted. Large volumes of African pangolin scales have been seized in Asia, emanating from Africa, for example in 2016 18.92 tons were intercepted and by the end of April 2017, 18.93 tons of scales had been intercepted leaving the African shores on route to Asia. With their numbers dwindling, pangolins are becoming more difficult for poachers to find and this has increased the asking price.

With this background of severe exploitation, it was voted on Wednesday 28th September at CITES CoP17, 2016, that all 8 pangolin species must be uplisted to Appendix I – no trade allowed. (Article II, paragraph 1 of CITES, “Appendix I shall include all species threatened with extinction, which are or may be affected by trade”.)

The species found in Southern Africa is the Temminck’s Ground Pangolin (*Smutsia temminckii*). They are being brought into South Africa from neighboring countries such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique as well as locally sourced, often in Limpopo Province. They are locally protected by **the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, Act 10 of 2004 (with 2013 revisions)**. The Temminck’s Ground Pangolin (*Smutsia temminckii*) is nationally listed as a **Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS)**. A fine not exceeding ZAR 10 million] or imprisonment for a period not exceeding ten years, or both such a fine and prison sentence may be imposed. In Gauteng Province, this species is listed as **Protected Game (Schedule 2), section 15(1)(a)** in terms of the **Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983**.

In addition to this, these animals have often been carried in a sack for up to 10 days without food or water, while being transported to a potential buyer. During this period, they are not fed (due to their specialist diet of ants and termites) nor given water. They are kept confined to prevent escape and do not have access to freedom of movement or natural light. They are sensitive to cold and being kept captive destabilizes their body temperature. This means that confiscated pangolin are usually found to be dehydrated and starving and in a generally debilitated and compromised state. This is all worsened by the high levels of stress the pangolins suffer from during this ordeal.