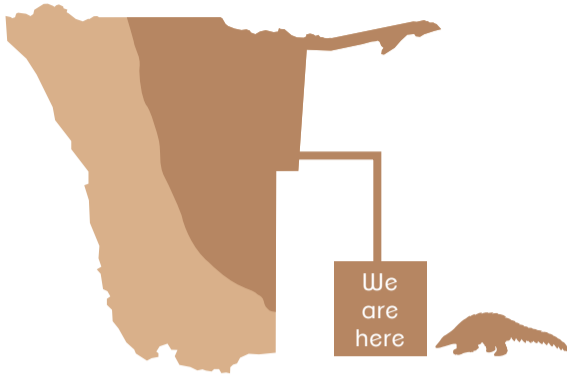




# PANGOLINS IN NAMIBIA.....

## Distribution



## Temminck's Ground Pangolin

### Common names:

Cape pangolin, Scaly anteater (English);  
Ongaka (OshiWambo); Ongaka (OtjiHerero); ñake (SiLozi);  
Nkaka (Rumanyo); //Khommi, //Khoms (Khoekhoegowab);  
Ietermagôg, Ystermagôg (Afrikaans); Schuppentier (German)



Photographed by Naun Amable

## What is a pangolin?

Pangolins are *scaly mammals* that eat ants and termites with a long sticky tongue. They are *mostly* nocturnal and rest in the day to save energy. *Four* species occur in *Africa* and four species occur in *Asia*, some live in the rainforest canopy whilst others live on the ground. The *scales* are made out of *keratin* and they overlap to provide protection against predators when the pangolin rolls into a *defensive ball*.



Photographed by Naun Amable

## Why are they valuable for the ecosystem?

A single pangolin can eat over *70 million* ants and termites *per year*. This provides a natural control of potential pest species that can negatively impact grasslands and crops as well as destroy fenceposts and other infrastructure. Pangolin often dig to open ant and termite nests, this turns and aerates the soil, thereby *improving seed germination*. With pangolins on the land, game, livestock, and crop farmers benefit from a better balanced ecology.



Photographed by Richard Zaayman

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Smutsia temminckii</b>
<b>IUCN status</b>	VU – Vulnerable A vulnerable species is a species which has been categorized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as likely to become endangered unless the circumstances that are threatening its survival and reproduction improve
<b>CITES</b>	Appendix I: All international trade, export, and import in pangolin is prohibited
<b>Namibian Status</b>	Specially protected
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most trafficked mammal worldwide with heavy pressure stemming from East Asian markets</li> <li>• Scales and parts are considered to have medicinal or spiritual purposes</li> <li>• There are a number of natural and man-made threats which include: electrified fencing, climate change, drought, veld fires, road accidents, shifting land use, habitat fragmentation, bush clearing, use of herbicides and pesticides, and drowning in open canals</li> </ul>
<b>Adult body weight</b>	8 – 18 kg
<b>Total body length</b>	70 – 125 cm including the tail length of 30 – 50 cm
<b>Diet</b>	Myrmecophagous. Pangolin are highly selective feeders that eat specific species of ants and termites. They mostly live independent of drinking water but will drink from free-standing water when it is available
<b>Territory size</b>	Individuals can have up to 10 – 69 dens in a territory of 2 – 36 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Dispersal age</b>	Weaned at 4 – 5 months and disperses from natal range about 12 months
<b>Clanship</b>	Mostly solitary, although males and females will sometimes move together and share a den
<b>Gestation period</b>	105 – 140 days
<b>Litter size</b>	1 pup per year, with twins rarely born
<b>Life span</b>	About 12 – 15 years. There is very little data on the longevity of any pangolin species in the wild

## Fascinating Facts

- The name pangolin comes from the Malay word penggulung, meaning “one who rolls up”
- A pangolin's scales make up approximately 20% of its body weight
- Temminck's ground pangolin are mostly bipedal, they walk on their hind legs and use the tail for balance
- Pangolin do not have teeth but rather a long-sticky tongue which is as long as their body
- The pangolin stomach is designed to grind up ants and termites using ingested sand and stones and the keratinous spines found on the stomach lining, similar to a bird's gizzard
- World Pangolin Day is celebrated every year on the 3rd Saturday of February

## Why are they the most trafficked mammal in the world?

Whole pangolin, scales and parts are used in traditional medicine and rituals for various beliefs. Pangolins are also consumed in Asia where their meat is believed to be a delicacy. Asian pangolin populations have been severely depleted, some to local extinction. Trafficked African pangolin species are increasingly intercepted from the illegal wildlife trade due to continued demand for pangolin products in Asia. This increasing pressure from the East Asian markets is in addition to any local demand for African pangolin species. The effect of the increasing illegal international trade on our (Namibian) pangolin population is currently unknown. In 2019 alone, there were 49 live seized pangolins in Namibia. Over the past three years, pangolin related cases have surpassed rhino and elephant combined.

## What can you do to save pangolins?

**SPREAD AWARENESS!** Share with others what you have learnt about pangolins and why it is important to protect them. If you see a pangolin, appreciate its presence. Never tell others about a location where a pangolin has been seen.

**REPORT** suspicious activity to the hotline. SMS **55 555**

**Suspicious activity includes:** Killing or capturing pangolin – Possession of pangolin and pangolin parts – Trade in dead or live pangolin and/or pangolin parts – People asking about pangolins or offering pangolins or pangolin parts for sale.

