

Preserving Pangolins

Have you ever met a pangolin? If you see one, you might think they look strange. They are the only mammals that also have scales. Because of their scales, they are sometimes called spiny anteaters.

There are eight species of pangolins. They live in Africa and Asia. Tree pangolins live in trees in tropical areas. Ground pangolins like places with sandy soil.

Pangolins have small heads and long tails. In fact, the tree pangolin's tail is even longer than its body! It uses its tail to climb.

In the Malay language, Pangolin means "rolling over." If a pangolin is scared, it curls into a ball. Pangolins are shy. They do not come out much during the day. Because they don't see well, they do better at night.

Pangolins have a good sense of smell. They sniff out ants and termites to eat. They open the nests with their front claws. Then they use their long, sticky tongues to catch the ants.

Sadly, pangolins are an endangered species. People capture them for their scales and their meat. Over 100,000 pangolins are taken from the wild each year. Governments and park groups are working to save the pangolin. This unique and gentle creature deserves to be preserved.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Pangolins are the only mammals that have _____.
 - a. Fur
 - b. Milk
 - c. Scales
 - d. Long tongues

2. Pangolins open ant nests with their _____.
 - a. Nose
 - b. Tongue
 - c. Tail
 - d. Claws

3. Which two reasons are given for why pangolins don't come out much during the day?
 - a. They are shy and they don't see well
 - b. They have long tails and scales
 - c. They have a good sense of smell and sharp claws
 - d. They curl into balls and use their tongues to catch ants

4. What is the most likely reason that pangolins are named after the word for "rolling over"?
 - a. Because they are shy
 - b. Because they roll into balls
 - c. Because they have scales
 - d. Because they have a good sense of smell

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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