

Media Releases 2010

SARS and Hawks rescue vulnerable species from wildlife trafficking

Pretoria, 29 October 2010 - A pangolin (or scaly anteater) which was destined for wildlife trafficking has been rescued and released into the wild – thanks to officials from South African Revenue Service (SARS) and the Hawks.

Following a tip-off, officials from the SARS and the Hawks confiscated the animal which is a vulnerable species during a swoop on an alleged illegal trader in a parking area outside a club in Alberton this week.

It is believed the animal was illegally caught in Limpopo and then kept in a makeshift cage in the back of a car.

The pangolin was handed over to officials from the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment who released the animal into the wild. And to their surprise, the environmental officials discovered that the “he” was a female who gave birth to a baby pangolin just as she was being released.

The alleged illegal trader was arrested and charged in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act. He claimed to be poor and that he intended to eat the animal. Investigators suspect that he intended to sell the animal to a wildlife trafficking syndicate.

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