"The Awesome Pangolin!"
Wow! Pangolins are very special and can be called scaly, nocturnal, anteaters. Their scales are brown or gray and their skin is tan. These wonderful creatures have been around for over 40 million years! They have been able to survive by changing as their surroundings changed, known as adapting.
These amazing pangolins live in South Africa in the countries of Urganda, Western Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique.
They usually stay in the moist areas, forests, or sandy soils that are near water, but they live and sleep in burrows, which are holes in the ground. There are 3 types of pangolins: the giant pangolin, the tree pangolin, and the common pangolin.
The giant pangolin lives in the moister areas of Urganda, Western Kenya, and Tanzania. It has big claws and it is a strong digger which allows it to easily open termite mounds. In fact, this cool type of pangolin can even walk on its hind legs!
The tree pangolin lives in the same region as the giant pangolin but stays in the forests. Its hind feet have extra long toes that help it to climb trees. Its tail also helps it to climb because the tail has a finger like pad on the tip.
The common pangolin likes to live in the woodlands, or savannas, that are near water. This pangolin has a small head and a long, broad tail.
A pangolin only eats ants and termites, but occasionally it will dig up bugs. It doesn't have teeth so it will eat rocks to grind up the food. They catch their food by using their sense of smell to find where the bugs are hiding. Most of the time they'll dig in a termite's nest because they're full of food.
It catches its food, or prey, with its supersticky and superlong tongue, which can be up to 16 inches long, to grab them. They will also close their eyes, nose, and ears so that angry bugs can't get in. A pangolin has to have lots of bugs to eat, so anywhere that doesn't have frost all year round and has lots of bugs to eat, there probably will be pangolins.
They stay in their burrows during the day and come out at night to eat. This is called being nocturnal.
All pangolins preen, or clean, themselves by scratching with its hind legs that actually lifts the scales so that the claws can reach the skin. It then uses its tongue to remove bugs from underneath the scales.
Leopards, hyenas, and even humans hunt pangolins but they're not the easiest things to catch. Their scales are very sharp and they deeply cut anything that touches them.
If they sense danger, the pangolin will first roll up into a ball and pretend to be a rock. Even if the predator knows that it isn't a rock, it will take a lot of force to unroll it. But if a predator does manage to unroll it, it will get all cut up.
If the enemy is still not quitting then the pangolin will spray them with a strong, horrible, foul smelling spray. It can do this because of its anal scent glands, protecting itself even more.
Even with their protection the pangolins are still endangered, which means that there are almost none of them left. Large animals hunt it for its meat. People kill them for their scales which are then traded in Asia.
The pangolin is also hunted because some people believe that if you mix their scales with certain tree bark, it will then ward off evil spirits and witchcraft. Others think that if the scales of a pangolin are buried near a man's door then a woman will receive power over him. He will become her servant.
None of these are good reasons to hunt the pangolin. So please help to save the PANGOLINS!
Here are some other interesting facts about pangolins. It's scales are made up of the same protein as your hair. It's tongue is pulled back into a sheath that retracts into the chest cavity. It does look like an armadillo, but believe it or not, the pangolin is NOT even related to an armadillo. It even acts like an armadillo, but it is a scaly ANTEATER!
References


http://www.arf.org/continent/wildlife/detail/pangolin