

Malaysia rescues 140 pangolins from suspected smugglers

Dozens of live pangolins were seized from suspected traffickers close to Malaysia's border with Thailand, officials said Wednesday, 8 November, thwarting the latest attempt to smuggle the critically endangered creatures.



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The pangolins, the world's most heavily trafficked mammals, were recovered on Tuesday in two separate raids in the northern Malaysian state of Kedah.

Despite concerted efforts to clamp down on trafficking, the illegal pangolin trade remains a major problem.

Pangolins - also known as scaly anteaters - fetch a high price on the black market as their meat is prized as a delicacy and their body parts as ingredients in traditional medicine in some areas of Asia and Africa.

In the first incident on Tuesday, a Malaysian man was caught with 85 pangolins in the town of Changlun near the border with Thailand, Kedah wildlife chief Muhammad Ali Che Aman told AFP.

Later, Malaysian officials stopped a Thai man at a roadblock near a crossing into Thailand and found 55 sacks, each containing a live pangolin, and bags full of scales, said local border agency chief Abdul Latif Abdul Rahman.

Officials did not give an estimate for the value of the seized pangolins and scales.

Covered in tough, overlapping scales, Pangolins are indigenous to parts of Asia and Africa, and eat ants using pink, sticky tongues almost as long as their bodies.

Source: AFP

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