



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# Pangolin

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**Why is in news?** Over 1,000 pangolins poached and trafficked in India in past five years

Pangolins are **scaly anteater mammals** and they have large, **protective keratin scales** covering their skin. They are the only known mammals with this feature.

It uses these scales as armour to defend itself against predators by rolling into a ball when threatened.

Insectivore- Pangolins are **nocturnal**, and their diet consists of mainly ants and termites, which they capture using their long tongues.

Out of the eight species of pangolin, the **Indian Pangolin** (*Manis crassicaudata*) and the **Chinese Pangolin** (*Manis pentadactyla*) are **found in India**.

Indian Pangolin is a **large anteater** covered by 11-13 rows of scales on the back.

A terminal scale is also present on the lower side of the tail of the Indian Pangolin, which is absent in the Chinese Pangolin.

Indian Pangolin is **widely distributed** in India, **except the arid region, high Himalayas and the North-East**. The species is also found in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

**Chinese Pangolin** is found in the Himalayan foothills in Eastern Nepal, Bhutan, Northern India, North-East Bangladesh and through Southern China.

The threats to Pangolins in India are **hunting and poaching** for **local consumptive use** (e.g. as a protein source and traditional medicine) and **international trade** for its meat and scales in East and South East Asian countries, particularly China and Vietnam.

They are **believed to be the world's most trafficked mammal**.

**Conservation Status:** Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I, IUCN Red List: **Indian Pangolin - Endangered**, **Chinese Pangolin is 'critically endangered'**, CITES: Appendix I