

Rohini Banerjee

Ms. Reichmuth

Period 4-5

27 October 2015

Pangolins In Peril

A lonesome male pangolin lumbers in the dry, sandy soil of the infamous Sahara, vigorously sniffing the parched ground for an underground termite hill. With dreadful eyesight, he has not observed the silent poachers squatting behind a red acacia tree. Suddenly, the poachers reach out, swiftly grabbing the unfortunate pangolin by the torso. Frightened, the pangolin curls into a tight ball—its only defense tactic. Soon this animal will be slaughtered, cooked, and served as a steaming bowl of delicious pangolin soup, according to Mark Anderson, a writer for the National Geographic website. Pangolins are mysterious yet intriguing animals. However, these fascinating creatures are constantly exploited for their aphrodisiacal and healing qualities. Furthermore, China's massive demand for pangolins is threatening their very existence. Aside from trafficking, there are many other contributing factors to unfortunate pangolin deaths. Luckily, we as a community can save pangolins in multiple ways. Pangolins native to Africa, and more specifically, Asia, are at the edge of extinction due to reckless human activity.

Most people haven't even heard of the mysterious and fascinating pangolins. Pangolins, commonly entitled as "artichokes with legs", are toothless mammals with tough keratin scales blanketing their entire bodies. Their long, long tails can be up to seventy centimeters long, according to the article "The Long-Tailed Pangolin." Pangolins are one of the only mammals that walk bipedally, meaning they walk on two legs instead of four. Consequently, their front

legs are mainly for ripping up dry ground in search of termites and ants, their primary food source. When finding a termite colony, pangolins use their exceptionally long tongues to suck up small insects hiding in their inner chambers. As stated in the video *World's Weirdest: Pangolins*, an average pangolin's tongue is 40 inches long. Furthermore, eight species of pangolins are evenly dispersed throughout the regions of Asia and Africa. In consonance with the article "Rollin' With the Pangolin", "These animals are able to occupy an assorted range of habitats, from forests to grasslands to savannas." Pangolins have one defense mechanism--a spiky, scaly ball. When threatened, pangolins curl up into tight balls to protect their tender noses and eyes. Despite their unique characteristics and intriguing appearances, the Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team (WRRT) states that pangolins are the most trafficked animal on the black market.

Pangolin exploitation and trafficking has rapidly increased during this past decade. Exploitation, as stated *Vocabulary.com*, is an act of victimizing a human being or animal. And many reports, like the one done by WRRT, prove that pangolins bear the most impact of exploitation. Although pangolin trafficking occurs mostly in the southeastern countries of China and Vietnam, the journey starts much earlier in places like Zimbabwe and Indonesia. Thousands of pangolins are illegally captured, killed, and transported to wealthy Asian countries through the black market. These innocent creatures are butchered in fancy Asian restaurants and served as a delicacy for wealthy citizens. Furthermore, their scales, holding great value, are used as aphrodisiacs and cures for numerous chronic illnesses and diseases. While countless Asian countries unjustly exploit pangolins, China's rapidly increasing population has the most significant impact on these poor creatures.

Pangolin meat and scales are prized in China. First of all, pangolin fetuses are cooked in a delicious "pangolin fetus soup." As reported by John D. Sutter, Chinese restaurants are willing to pay 350 U.S. dollars per pangolin for their soups. Moreover, affording pangolin meat is thought to symbolize a person's wealth and status. In fact, an article titled "The Status Of Chinese Pangolins" stated that, "After opening up the reformation, the common practice of eating wild animal parts has become more prevailing..." Secondly, pangolin scales are very valuable in China. Many believe they cure many conditions and diseases including hysteria, malaria, and deafness. However, conforming to the "Blog of Serendipity", there is *no* scientific evidence supporting these fictitious claims. Lastly, stuffed pangolins are sold as souvenirs in many different regions of China. Even though China clearly has a lasting effect on the rapid decrease of pangolins, there are a few other reasons why these innocent creatures are dying out.

Specific species of pangolins like the Indian pangolins are perishing due to deforestation. Since the human population is steadily increasing, many settlements are encroaching into uninhabited forest areas. However this negatively impacts the pangolins. Pangolins are very selective in terms of their living environment and roosting area. As more and more trees are felled, the pangolin population drastically decreases. Consequently, many scientists confine pangolins in pangoriums for protection from potential poachers. However, it is proven that pangolins in captivity have considerably shorter life spans than pangolins in the wild. In addition to captivity issues, many food problems arise. It is nearly impossible for humans to create the perfect formula to feed and sustain captive pangolins. The food they consume in the wild cannot be recreated. Therefore, these creatures numbers are rapidly decreasing. While there are many reasons of pangolin exploitation, there are many ways to save pangolins from extinction.

We, as productive citizens of America, can begin saving pangolins by reducing the demand for them in Asian countries. We can achieve this simply by finding a replacement for pangolins used in medicine. Although many claim that pangolin scales cure arthritis, liver diseases, and other illnesses, these assertions are merely inaccurate statements. There are many alternatives to pangolin scales with positive health results. Moreover, we can raise money to create a research project or center on pangolins. Hypothetically speaking, if half of residents in San Jose donated just fifteen dollars, we would have approximately seven and half million dollars to donate entirely towards saving pangolins. Lastly, we can petition for laws protecting pangolins. If our government is truly a democracy, we the citizens, should have the say on what laws should or should not be passed. Even though our contributions towards saving creatures like pangolins may seem insignificant, spreading the word of salvation can make a significant difference.

Pangolins in Africa and Asia are at the edge of extinction due to reckless human activity. Despite the fact that pangolins are wondrous creatures, these poor creatures are currently being exploited for their meat and scales. Additionally, China's remarkable influence on the deaths of pangolins is causing their population to rapidly decrease. Other factors like deforestation are also negatively impacting the pangolins. Although pangolin population is frighteningly close to zero, there are many ways we can save pangolins from extinction. It is up to each individual to make a difference to save unique creatures like pangolins from becoming history. As Samuel Dash once said, "When you believe in what you're doing and use your imagination and initiative, you can make a difference."

Re-word
from
now
on

Works Cited

- "Long-Tailed Pangolins." *The Animal Files*. n.d. Web. 19 ~~October~~ ^{1 Oct.} 2015.
- NatGeoWild. "World's Weirdest - Pangolin." Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 6 ^{1 Dec.} ~~December~~ 2012. Web. 16 ~~October~~ ^{-1 Oct.} 2015. ^{-1 Site Name} ^{-1 Organization Name} ^{-1 Oct.}
- Grosshuesch, Craig. "Rollin' With the Pangolin." n.d. Web. 19 ~~October~~ 2015. ^{didn't use in essay}
- "Help Save the Most Trafficked Mammal in the World." *Wildlife Alliance*. n.d. Web. 19 October 2015.
- Sutter D., John. "The Most Trafficked Mammal You've Ever Heard Of." *CNN*. n.d. Web. 19 ^{-1 Oct.} ~~October~~ 2015.
- "The Status and Conservation of Pangolins in China." n.d. Web. 19 ~~October~~ ^{-1 Oct.} 2015.
- "Exploitation." *Vocabulary.com*. n.d. Web. 19 ~~October~~ ^{-1 Oct.} 2015.
- Anderson, Mark. "PANGOLIN PHOTOS: Fetus Soup, Other 'Cures' Drive Trade." *National Geographic*. 14 July 2009. Web. 21 ~~October~~ ^{-1 Oct.} 2015.
- Dash, Samuel. "Samuel Dash." *Brainy Quotes*. n.d. Web. 21 ~~October~~ ^{-1 Oct.} 2015.
- "The Unknown Peril of the Pangolins." *Padalickingood*. 12 September 2011. Web. 27 October 2015. ^{didn't use in essay}

40/25 - 12/28/25

-1 Alphabetize

24/25

Ms. R's "SAT" Writing Outline

25/24

Student Name: Robini Banerjee Date: 10/19/15 Class: Seachmouth 4-5

Topic: Pangolins Audience: Representative of Hong Kong Environmental Services

1. Decide on a "thesis" (statement/main idea/thought) that you want to prove or describe: Pangolins native to Africa and Asia, are at the edge of extinction due to reckless human activity.
2. Brainstorm "arguments" (examples/main points/reasons) that will support your thesis:
 - ① what is a pangolin?
 - pangolin environment
 - pangolin poachers
 - pangolin trafficking
 - pangolin characteristics
 - ③ how to save pangolins from extinction
 - what pangolins are used for
 - exploitations
 - cost of pangolins in black market
 - china + pangolins ④
 - how we can save P ⑤
3. Circle the 3 strongest arguments that will support your statement and number them from 1-3.
4. You are ready to go! Don't freak out.

Intro/Paragraph 1 (SAT Format)

Story (Text-to-Self Connect): A lonesome male pangolin lumbers in the dry soil of the Sahara, sniffing for an underground termite hill... gets captured.

Arguments to support your thesis:

- Argument 1) what is the pangolin? state unique characteristics
- Argument 2) explain pangolin exploitation + trafficking
- Argument 3) china's influence on the decrease of pangolin population
- Argument 4) other reasons why they're dying out
- Argument 5) how we can save pangolins from extinction

Thesis: Pangolins all over Earth are at the brink of extinction, simply because of human activity.

Argument 1/Paragraph 2 (write topic here): what is the pangolin? state unique characteristics
Write 3 claims to support argument 1:

- Claim 1) characteristics
- Claim 2) where they are found
- Claim 3) defense mechanism

Transition/Summarize argument 1 and introduce argument 2: Despite their unique characteristics and intriguing appearance, the Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team states that it is the most trafficked animal...

Argument 2/Paragraph 3 (write topic here): explain pangolin exploitation & trafficking
Write 3 claims to support argument 2:

Claim 1) what is exploitation + how does it impact pangolins

Claim 2) what are pangolins trafficked for

Claim 3) where are they being exploited + how trafficking works

Transition/Summarize argument 2 and introduce argument 3: While numerous

Asian countries exploit pangolins, China's rapidly increasing population has the greatest impact/influence...

Argument 3/Paragraph 4 (write topic here): China's influence of decrease in pangolin
Write 3 claims to support argument 3: Population.

Claim 1) increase of population = increase of demand

Claim 2) use of meat - sign of wealth & status \$350

Claim 3) use of scales - cure hysteria, malaria, deafness + aphrodisiacs

Claim 4) stuffed pangolins = souvenirs

Transition/Summarize argument 3: China clearly has a lasting effect on the decrease of pangolin population. But there are ^{courtless} other reasons why these innocent animals are dying.

Argument 4/Paragraph 5 (write topic here): other reasons of death
Write 3 claims to support argument 2:

Claim 1) damage of natural habitat

Claim 2) pangolins in captivity die faster

Claim 3) food issues

Transition/Summarize argument 2 and introduce argument 3: While there are many

reasons of pangolin ^{exploitation} there are many ways to donate millions to save pangolins from extinction.

Argument 5/Paragraph 6 (write topic here): how we can save pangolins
Write 3 claims to support argument 3: reduce demand for these animals

Claim 1) find a replacement for pangolins used in medicine

Claim 2) raise money to create a research project/center on pangolins

Claim 3) petition laws protecting pangolins

Transition/Summarize argument 3: If we all make our seemingly insignificant contribution ^{to} ~~of~~ saving ^e pangolins from extinction, we can make a significant difference.

Summary/Paragraph 5 (T.A.S. Format)

Summaries need to be even better than the intro. Just reverse the order!

Thesis: Pangolins are at the edge of extinction due to reckless human activity.

Arguments to support your thesis:

Argument 1) what is the pangolin? unique characteristics

Argument 2) pangolin exploitation

Argument 3) China's influence on pangolin deaths

Argument 4) other reasons for their deaths

Argument 5) how we can save pangolins

Story (Text-to-Self Connect): It is up to each individual to make a difference.

As Samuel Dash once said, "... " (Brainy Quotes)