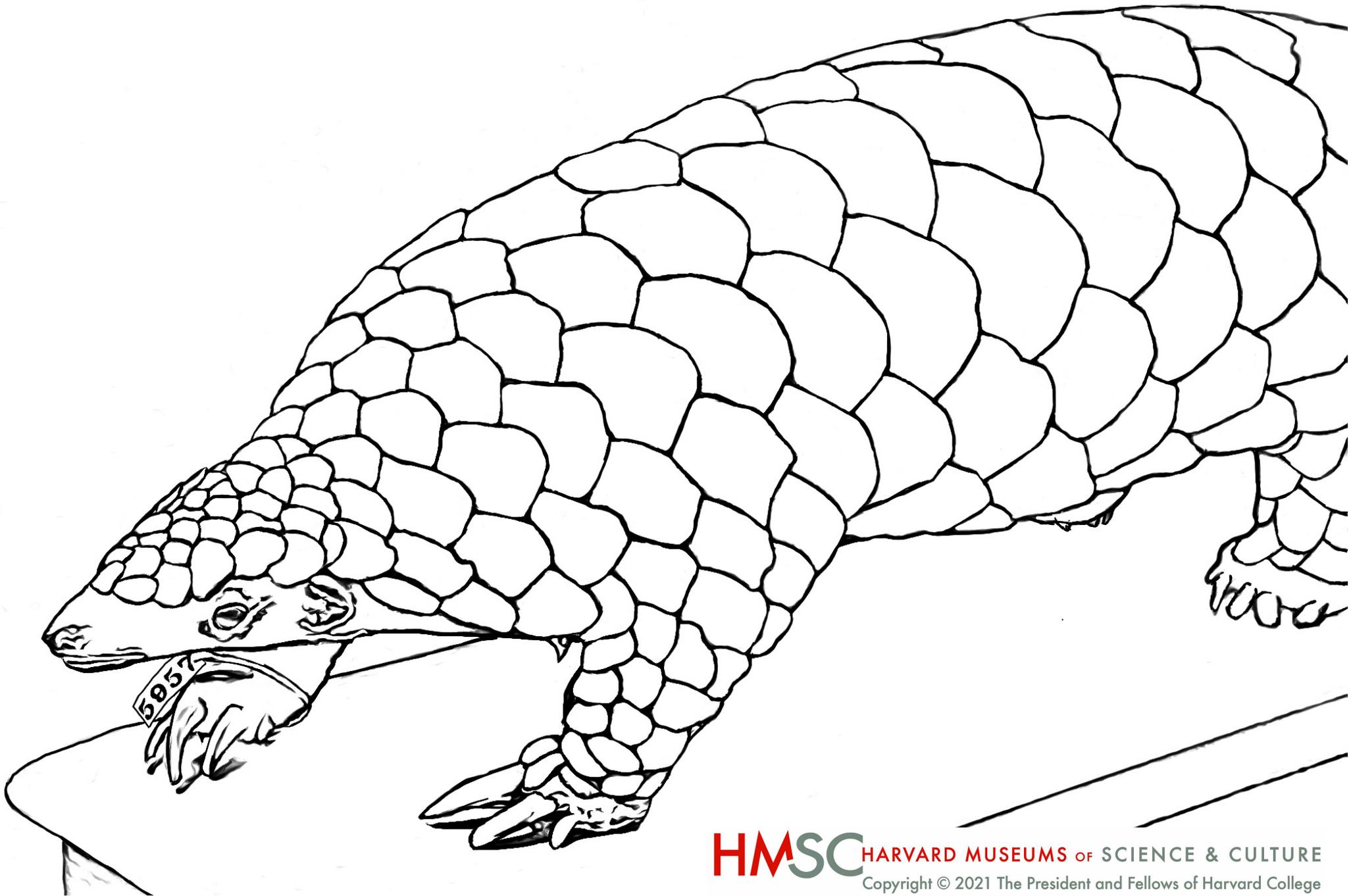


Temminck's Pangolin, *Manis temminckii*

Museum of Comparative Zoology Mammalogy Collection MCZ 5957





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On display at the Harvard Museum of Natural History in the [Great Mammal Hall](#)

Covered in protective plate-like scales, pangolins vary in color from light to yellowish brown through to olive and dark brown. When threatened, they curl up into a ball and use their scales to defend themselves. They are nocturnal mammals that can be found on the continents of Africa and Asia. **Temminck's Pangolins** range from Chad and Sudan to northern South Africa.

Pangolins have no teeth; their diet consists of termites, larvae, and ants which they locate using a highly sensitive sense of smell. They use their strong limbs and sharp claws to dig out termite mounds and anthills lapping up hundreds of insects at a time on their extra-long sticky tongues. The pangolin's tail is exceptionally strong and important for stabilization while it uses its front claws to dig for food. The tail also acts as a counterweight so they can walk bipedally on their hind legs allowing them to keep their front claws sharp. Pangolins often carry their offspring, known as "pangopups," on top of their tails until the young can move around independently!

All eight species of pangolin are threatened either by poaching or the destruction of their natural habitat and are protected under national and international laws.

Learn more about pangolins in the HMNH's [What's in a Name?](#) interactive online exhibit.

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