



March-April 2016

## The Pangolin

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

"Mary, take a look at this picture," said Mrs. Jones, pointing at a picture in a book.

"Wow! What is this crazy looking animal?" Mary asked.

"That's a pangolin (pang'gow-lin)," Mrs. Jones answered. "One of your school lessons requires you to write a short story on an unusual animal. I think this one might be a good project."

A week later, Mary was ready to read her report to her family: "The Pangolin, by Mary Jones. The pangolin (or scaly anteater) is an odd-looking mammal whose back and tail is covered with hard, overlapping brown scales. They are the only known mammals to have scales. Their scales are made of keratin, the same stuff our nails and hair are made of, and keep growing their entire life. The scales cover all of their body except their snout, eyes, ears, belly and the inner side of their legs.

"When pangolins feel scared they curl up into a tight ball. The scales protect the soft belly, legs and face.

The pangolin's scales are hooked to muscles under the skin, and can be moved to



point the scales towards their attacker. They can also spray the attacker with a foul smelling liquid made in a special gland near their bottom (kind of like a skunk). They can also use this stinky stuff, along with their urine and droppings, to mark their territory. If all this doesn't work and they get caught, they will thrash about using their tail muscles. The scales are very sharp and can cut and slice the skin of the attacker.

"There are four kinds of pangolins living in Africa and four kinds in Asia. Some live on the ground and rest and sleep in underground burrows. Others are good climbers, using their sharp claws and prehensile (or grasping) tails to grip and scale trees where they live and find shelter. They can hang from branches with their special tail.

"Pangolins have four legs. Their front legs are shorter than the back legs. They have five toes on each foot with sharp claws on each toe, which are used for digging into ant and termite nests, or used to pull bark off of trees or logs to get at insects. The three middle claws on the front feet are so long that the front feet are not useful for walking. So the pangolin will curl the front claws under its forepaws and walk on its two hind legs, using the long tail as a counterbalance.

"Pangolins are insectivores which are animals that only eat insects. There are only 19 kinds of termites and ants that they like to eat.

Most pangolins are nocturnal, feeding at night. They usually eat about 90 times during the night, each meal lasting about one minute. It is estimated that one pangolin eats about 70 million insects a year!

"After using its claws to tear

open an ant or termite mound, the pangolin uses a very long, rod-shaped, sticky tongue to catch its food. When fully stretched out, the pangolin's tongue can be up to 16 inches (40 centimeters) longer than their head and body! Their tongues are hooked to its pelvis and last pair of ribs and the rest is stored in their chest cavity. In the chest cavity are special glands that coat the tongue with sticky bug-catching saliva.

"The pangolins have special muscles that close their nostrils and ears, protecting them from the biting, angry insects. They also have special muscles in their mouths which prevent ants and termites from escaping after being captured.



"Pangolins do not have teeth and are not able to chew the ants and termites, so they swallow sand and small stones. Their stomach is lined with spines that hold the sand and stones which mash and grind the insects. These spines made out of keratin (the same stuff that makes up their scales).

"The pangolin may be funny looking, and have lots of odd parts, but all those parts are important and help the pangolin to live and survive. Those parts look like design to me, and I think design always points to a Designer," Mary concluded.

"Wow! What an excellent report Mary."

"Thanks Mom. You sure helped me find an unusual animal for my report!"

Mrs. Jones replied, "You're welcome, but the thanks must go to God for His incredible handiwork! God made so many animals and plants for our enjoyment ...all so very different and exciting to study. When you really study the things God has made you can't help but praise the Creator."

\*For references to article go to [www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm](http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm)



Find the 20 differences between the two Pangolin Scenes



## CROSS-OUTS

Studying the things that God has made  
can be great fun.

To solve the puzzle below **CROSS OUT ALL:**

1. Fish 2. Birds 3. Colors 4. Candy 5. Shapes

OWL	THE	TROUT
WORKS	ORANGE	TRIANGLE
LICORICE	SHARK	OF
DUCK	BROWN	THE
LORD	RECTANGLE	TAFFY
SALMON	ARE	CHICKEN
GREEN	GREAT,	OVAL
FUDGE	EEL	SOUGHT
OUT	SPARROW	RED
SQUARE	SKITTLES	OF
ALL	COD	ROBIN
BLUE	THEM	CIRCLE
CHOCOLATE	BASS	THAT
HAVE	HAWK	PURPLE
DIAMOND	PLEASURE	LOLLIPOP
PERCH	THEREIN.	EAGLE
YELLOW	PSALM 111:2	

FOR ANSWERS GO TO: <http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/NewsletterAnswers.htm>

Kid's Think & Believe Too is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO, 81502. Editors: Lanny and Marilyn Johnson. Kid's Think & Believe may be freely copied and distributed in its entirety for non-commercial use. AOI is a tax-exempt non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and a member of ECFA. © 2016 Alpha Omega Institute [www.discovercreation.org](http://www.discovercreation.org)