



REHABILITATED, LIBERATED AND MONITORED: KOSHA.



find out more

PANGOLIN

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

Written by **Ruth Berry**

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Produced by: **Diana Keam and Bruce Young**

Executive producers: **Susanne Lummer, Sabine Holzer**

1x50 min., 4K, 5.1



Kosha, a Temminck's ground pangolin from Zimbabwe, represents a remarkable success story in wildlife rehabilitation. Rescued from poachers as a pup in 2017, this small, scaly, ant-eating mammal is believed to be the longest-tracked pangolin in the wild, providing unprecedented insights into pangolin behaviour.

At the Tikki Hywood Foundation (THF) outside Harare, where Kosha's journey began, founder Lisa Hywood and Chief Scientist Ellen Connolly have treated over 300 pangolins in the past decade. These animals, the world's most trafficked mammals, are primarily poached for their scales, which are sought after in Asian traditional medicine despite being made of the same material as human fingernails.

Kosha's early rehabilitation challenged conventional wisdom. When she refused milk as a pup, pangolin minder Luke Kamuhuni took her to an ant nest in a last-ditch effort to save her life. Though considered too young to eat solid food, Kosha eagerly consumed the ants, revolutionizing pangolin rehabilitation practices. After completing "boarding school," where she learned survival skills, Kosha was tagged and released into the wild.

Tracking Kosha proved challenging as she roamed Zimbabwe's wilderness. When her transmitter was found in a rocky gully, the team feared the worst, but camera traps revealed she was still alive and thriving.

But her greatest achievement came when she mated with a wild pangolin and successfully gave birth to a healthy pup – the first of many. According to THF's standards, Kosha's successful integration was a crucial indicator of the success of their rehabilitation programme. This was a cause for celebration.

For six years, Kosha has been monitored, longer than any other ground pangolin in the national park where she was released. Her success story demonstrates that rehabilitated pangolins can thrive when released into protected areas with adequate space and resources. Through thousands of camera trap images and direct observations, she continues to provide valuable data about pangolin behaviour in the wild.

Today, Kosha's legacy extends beyond her own survival as she paves the way for even more successful pangolin releases. One day her signal may

disappear, but her contribution to pangolin conservation will endure through the wealth of knowledge she has provided about these secretive creatures and their capacity to flourish when given a second chance at life in the wild.

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