

Southern elephant seals likely detect prey bioluminescence for foraging

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Bioluminescence may play a key role in successful foraging for southern elephant seals, a deep-sea predator, according to research published Aug. 29 in the open access journal *PLOS ONE*.

The authors of the study, led by Jade Vacquié-Garcia, monitored the diving behaviour of four female southern [elephant seals](#) in the southern Indian Ocean that were also equipped with light detectors.

The researchers found that increased bioluminescence was correlated with higher foraging intensity, suggesting that bioluminescence likely provides seals with valuable indications of prey occurrence.

More information: Vacquié-Garcia J, Royer F, Dragon A-C, Viviant M, Bailleul F, et al. (2012) Foraging in the Darkness of the Southern Ocean: Influence of Bioluminescence on a Deep Diving Predator. *PLOS ONE* 7(8): e43565. [doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0043565](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0043565)

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