

Hornless rhino carcasses found in S.Africa

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A bird cleaning the eye of a rhino while another sits on its head at Kruger National Park in South Africa. Wildlife officials have found 18 rhino carcasses with their horns removed dumped by poachers in a remote area near the park, a spokesman for the northern province of Limpopo said.

South African wildlife officials have found 18 rhino carcasses dumped by poachers in a remote area with their horns removed, a spokesman for the northern province of Limpopo said Friday.

The carcasses were discovered during a game census when a helicopter flew over an area near Kruger National Park, the country's largest wildlife reserve, said Joshua Kwapa, the province's environment and tourism spokesman.

Kwapa said the rhinos appear to have been killed between 2005 and 2008.

"All of them have been de-horned. Obviously this is a devastating incident. We were very shocked following the discovery," he told AFP.

Rhino poaching in [South Africa](#) has escalated sharply, driven by demand for rhino horn in Asia, where it is used as a traditional medicine.

The national parks agency says 261 [rhinos](#) have been poached this year, up from 122 in 2009.

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