

14 elephants die of poisoning in Zimbabwe: officials

October 7 2015



An African elephant is pictured on November 17, 2012 at Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe

At least 14 elephants died from poisoning in three separate incidents in Zimbabwe last month with poachers suspected of being behind 11 of the deaths, parks authorities said Wednesday.

Five of the pachyderms were poisoned in Hwange National Park, the

country's largest, and six more were found dead by a patrol outside the [park](#) in the nearby Deka Safari area.

Some of the dead animals had their tusks removed, Carol Washaya, spokeswoman for the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority said in a statement.

She said police had picked up five men in connection with the deaths in Hwange in northwestern Zimbabwe.

"A total of 11 elephants died to chemical poaching in Hwange National Park and Deka Safari Area, and another three of dump-site poisoning," Washaya said.

Laboratory tests showed the three deaths were due to cyanide poisoning, and authorities believe that the three elephants consumed the [toxic material](#) from a dump in Kariba town.

Poaching is common in Zimbabwe's game parks with elephants and rhino as the main targets.

Last year, more than 100 [elephants](#) died after suspected poachers placed cyanide near their watering holes.

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