

Poachers target Africa's lions, vultures with poison

September 27 2017, by Christopher Torchia

Poisoning Africa's wildlife is an old practice, but conservationists fear such incidents are escalating, saying relatively easy access to agricultural chemicals and the surging illegal market for animal parts are increasing pressure on a number of beleaguered species. The threat is compounded by the indiscriminate nature of poisoning, in which a single contaminated carcass can take down a range of animals, particularly scavengers such as vultures.

This month, a continent-wide database was launched to gather data on wildlife poisoning and better understand a phenomenon that has been widely documented in southern Africa, where a reported 70 lions have been fatally poisoned in the last 18 months. The African Wildlife Poisoning Database dates to 1961 and lists nearly 300 poisoning incidents in 15 African countries that killed more than 8,000 animals.

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