

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park



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A spotted hyena in Kruger National Park

Kruger National Park is in South Africa. Many animals live there. Elephants live there. Lions live there. Giraffes live there. Zebras live there. Hyenas live there. The animals live in the wild.

Many Africans do not like hyenas. They think hyenas are evil. Hyenas are awake at night. They are loud. They make weird noises.

Hyenas eat other animals. Some hyenas only eat animals that are already dead. But spotted hyenas hunt. They are good hunters. They are as good as lions.

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Spotted hyenas work together to solve problems

The hyena has very strong jaws. Its jaws can crush bones. Hyenas eat almost every part of an animal. They even eat the bones. Lions cannot eat bones. Their jaws are not strong enough.

Spotted hyenas are very smart. They work together to hunt. They watch the sky. They look for vultures. Vultures are birds. Vultures fly above dead animals. The hyenas follow the vultures. Hyenas also steal food from other animals. They steal food from lions. Lions steal food from the hyenas, too.

Lions and hyenas are enemies. Spotted hyenas are smarter. But lions are bigger and stronger. Sometimes they fight. Usually it is over food. That is because they eat the same foods. They also just really don't like one another.

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Spotted hyenas live in groups. These are called clans. Clans have between 10 to 40 hyenas. One female runs the clan.

Spotted hyenas live in a den. They dig the den. It is in the ground. The clan shares the den. The den can be very big.

Baby hyenas are cubs. Cubs hide in the den. The den keeps them safe. A mom usually has two cubs at a time. Cubs grow fast. They soon join the rest of the clan in hunting.



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Spotted hyena cubs outside their den