

Top-10 Countdown Africa's Most Deadly Animals



By U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters

Africa is known for its diverse wildlife. Here is a countdown of the top-10 most deadly African animals.

#10: Rhinoceros

Rhinos are the second-largest land mammals. White rhinos weigh around 5,000 pounds. Both white and black rhinos live in Africa. They are critically endangered. Their numbers drop everyday due to poaching. Poaching is illegally hunting the rhinos—usually for their horns.

Rhinos can't see very well. They also have short tempers. This makes them dangerous. Rhinos will charge at full force and use their horns to attack. The number of people killed by rhinos is unknown. But it is best to be careful near rhinos.

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#9: Lion

Lions kill around 70 people a year in Africa. Not all lions target humans. The ones that do are usually sick, injured, or old males. Scientists think that they attack humans because humans are an easy meal. Humans can't run as fast as animals like zebra or gazelles. Humans don't have hooves or horns that can injure a lion.

#8: Cape Buffalo

Cape buffalo are huge. They live in large herds. They protect each other using their large horns and formidable strength. Even lions don't bother the Cape buffalo. It's too risky for them. Cape buffalo protect themselves by attacking in groups. They kill 200 people per year.



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#7: Elephant

Elephants are also critically endangered. African elephants are the largest land mammals on earth. They can weigh up to 13,000 pounds. Elephants that feel threatened by humans will not hesitate to attack. Males are responsible for the most human deaths. Elephants kill around 500 people each year.

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#6: Hippopotamus

Hippos live in and around the water in Africa. They are fiercely territorial. They will attack anyone nearby. Hippos can run 20 miles per hour. They have massive jaws with 20-inch tusks. Hippos kill around 3,000 humans each year.

#5: Nile Crocodile

This fearsome beast grows up to 16 feet long. It weighs around 500 pounds. Humans share the same water sources as the crocs. So crocs and humans run into each other regularly. People go to the water to wash clothes, fish, or bathe. This is when the most crocodile attacks occur. Nile crocs kill at least 3,000 people per year.

#4: Tsetse Fly

The tsetse fly is a bloodsucker. It doesn't look too different from a common housefly. Yet kills around 10,000 people each year. The tsetse fly carries a parasite. It causes Sleeping Sickness. It also carries another a parasite that kills livestock like cattle. If Sleeping Sickness isn't treated, it causes death.

#3: Black Mamba

The black mamba isn't actually black. It is a light grayish-brown. The inside of its mouth, however, is as black as coal. The black mamba is one of the most venomous snakes in the world. One bite has enough venom to kill 12 full-grown men within an hour. The snake is also known to chase people. It can move up to 12 miles per hour. Growing up to 8 feet long, the black mamba is one of the most feared snakes in Africa.

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#2: Puff Adder

The puff adder is one of Africa's most deadly snakes. It kills the most people each year. It is a well-camouflaged snake. It freezes when someone approaches. People don't see it lying there. Most bites occur when a person accidentally steps on the snake. It's not known exactly how many people the puff adder kills each year. But snakes kill more than 30,000 Africans each year.



By Bernard Dupont from France via Wikimedia Commons

#1: Mosquito

The mosquito is both the smallest and most deadly animal on this countdown. It kills more people than all the other animals on this list combined. Mosquitoes carry diseases. These kill more than 1 million people each year. These diseases include Malaria, Dengue Fever, and Yellow Fever. Malaria alone kills more than 3,000 African children each day.