

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park



By Bernard DUPONT from FRANCE via Wikimedia Commons

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.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park



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.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park

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

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. It has elephants, lions, giraffes, zebras, and hyenas. It has many other types of animals, too. The animals live in the wild. They are safe from humans in the park.

Many Africans do not like hyenas because they think hyenas are evil. It's easy to understand why. Hyenas are nocturnal, which means they are active at night. They are loud. They make weird noises. They make crazy sounding laughing noises. They call to each other by making loud whooping sounds.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park



Spotted hyenas work together to solve problems

Many people think that hyenas don't hunt. They think that hyenas eat food they find. But spotted hyenas hunt. They are good hunters. They are as good as lions.

Hyenas are related to dogs. But they are much stronger. The hyena has very strong jaws. It has a very strong bite. It can crush bones with its jaws. 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 have big brains. Spotted hyenas are very smart. They are as smart as chimpanzees. They work together to hunt. They watch the sky. They look for vultures. Vultures circle over a dead animal. They follow the vultures to find dead animals. Hyenas also steal food from other animals. They steal food from lions. Lions steal food from the hyenas, too.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park

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

Spotted hyenas live in groups called clans. Clans have between 10 and 40 hyenas. One female runs each clan. Female spotted hyenas are bigger and stronger than the males.

Spotted hyenas live in a den that they dig in the ground. The clan shares the den. The den can be very big.

Baby hyenas are called cubs. The cubs hide in the den to stay safe. A mom usually has two cubs at a time. The cubs are born with their eyes open and grow very fast. They soon join the rest of the clan in hunting.



Spotted hyena cubs outside their den

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A spotted hyena in Kruger National Park

Kruger National Park is in South Africa. It has elephants, lions, giraffes, zebras, and hyenas, and many other types of animals, too. The animals live in the wild and are protected by the park.

Many Africans do not like hyenas because they think hyenas are evil. It's easy to understand why. Hyenas are nocturnal, which means they are active at night. They are loud and make weird noises. They make crazy sounding laughing noises and call to each other by making loud whooping sounds. These whooping noises can be heard for miles and can sound rather creepy.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park



Spotted hyenas work together to solve problems

Many people think that spotted hyenas are scavengers and that they don't hunt, but this is not true. A scavenger only eats animals that are already dead. Spotted hyenas are excellent hunters. They are as good as lions.

Hyenas are related to dogs, but they are much more powerful. The hyena has very strong jaws that it uses to crush bones. Hyenas eat almost every part of an animal including the bones. Lions cannot eat bones because their jaws are not strong enough to chew up the bones.

Spotted hyenas have big brains and are very smart—they are at least as smart as chimpanzees. Spotted hyenas work together when they hunt. They also find food by watching the sky for vultures. Vultures circle over dead animals and the hyenas follow the vultures to find dead animals. Hyenas also steal food from other animals, including lions. Lions steal food from the hyenas, too.

Lions and hyenas are long-time enemies. Hyenas are smarter than lions, but lions are bigger and stronger. Sometimes they fight—usually it is over food because they both hunt and eat the same animals. They also just really don't like one another.

The Spotted Hyenas of Kruger National Park

Spotted hyenas live in groups called clans. Clans have between 10 and 40 hyenas. One female runs each clan. Female spotted hyenas are bigger and stronger than the males.

Spotted hyenas live in a den that they dig in the ground. The clan shares the den. The den can be very big and have many entrances.

Baby hyenas are called cubs. The cubs hide in the den to stay safe. A mom usually has two cubs at a time. The cubs are born with their eyes open and grow very fast. They soon join the rest of the clan in hunting.



Spotted hyena cubs outside their den