

Rhino killed during full moon in Pongola

A full moon makes it easier to locate the rhinos and shoot them with accuracy in the dark.



Poachers struck under the cover of moonlight.

Another rhino was sadly killed at a private game reserve in the Pongola area on Thursday evening. The rhino bull was found dead, but this time around, the horns were still intact. Police suspect that the poachers may have only wounded the animal and it ran away to die somewhere else. Rangers found the rhino on Friday morning and contacted the police. Last week was full moon, oddly enough known as ‘Poacher’s Moon’. There is also a known link between rhino poaching and the full moon, which is that anti-poaching teams actively monitor on these nights. The reason is that the full moon provides better visibility at night, allowing poachers to move through the bush without using flashlights. It also contributes to fewer obstacles, since it reduces the risk of injury or getting lost. Poachers often track rhinos during the day and return to kill them at night. A full moon makes it easier to locate the rhinos and shoot them with accuracy in the dark. In regions like Pongola, where reserves border on dense bush and easy escape routes, poachers time their attacks with the full moon to strike fast and disappear.

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