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Tourism KwaZulu-Natal

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*Zulu Kingdom. Exceptional*

## **Media Release**

25 October 2023

For immediate release

**To:** All media

**Attention:** News Editors and Journalists

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## **KWAZULU-NATAL'S SEVEN WILDLIFE WONDERS**

Game viewing shouldn't be confined to open vehicles – although input from a local guide, some refreshments and safety are important during a Big Five experience!

KwaZulu-Natal, with its extremely diverse wildlife offering, lets you explore the unconventional and get far more up-close-and-personal with the province's treasure trove of interesting creatures and beautiful landscapes.

For those hunting more unusual encounters (especially keen photographers looking for some National Geographic exposure), we have at least seven never-to-be-forgotten eco excursions:

1. **Sundowners at Isimangaliso Wetland Park:** Under the steadfast gaze of the iconic fish eagle, a cruise along the estuary at the heart of this World Heritage Site lets you drink in the peace of nature surrounded by pelicans and flamingos, stealthy crocodiles and grunting hippos that bob up beside the boat.
2. **Bath with elephants:** Enjoy early morning or sunset water safaris on the massive Lake Jozini which is the focal point of the Pongola Game Reserve. Few African

reserves offer boat safaris which enable guests to watch herds of antelope and even elephants stopping by for a drink or fun filled swim from the water.

3. **Go underground:** Game reserves across KZN offer amazing game viewing hides. But Zimanga Private Game Reserve near Mkuze prides itself on the more unusual with nine hides, including two bird bath or reflection hides, a lagoon hide for water birds and crocodiles and the Umgodi overnight hide. Here, guests sleep over beside a waterhole with a large window opening just a few centimetres above water level. A variety of animals – including big cats – slake their thirsts just four metres away.
4. **Soar with the Vultures:** The Barry Porter Memorial Vulture Viewing Hide, near Port Shepstone on the South Coast, overlooks a “vulture restaurant” where visitors can book a 2-hour viewing experience at the cliff’s edge. Alternatively, the Drakensberg is home to at least two vulture hides. The Giant’s Castle Lammergeier hide has produced some of the best images of these birds anywhere in the world whilst the Golden Gate vulture hide lets you meet up with Cape and highly endangered Bearded Vultures.
5. **Go deep:** The KZN East Coast is dotted with marine protected areas. From the unspoiled and world renowned Sodwana Bay in the north to Aliwal Shoal to the South, visitors can don their fins and explore. Aliwal Shoal is famous for its deep reefs and pinnacles with ancient corals growing on fossilised sand and offers spectacular shark diving opportunities with ragged tooth sharks, tiger sharks and blacktip sharks attracting international tourists and film crews each year. Protea Banks, near Shelly Beach, is a shark sanctuary that is home to hammerheads and comes with spectacular deep reefs, canyons and caves as well as diverse sponges and soft corals.
6. **Become a beach bum:** In KZN, beaches are not just for tanning. Unique beach experiences include a walk in the Petrified Forest near Port Edward where one can explore a series of marine fossil beds, a careful stroll at the mouth of the St Lucia estuary where massive crocs bake in the sun or even a turtle tour between November and February when Leather Back and Loggerhead Turtles arrive at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Beach to lay their eggs. Towards the end of the season, you can watch the hatchlings bravely making their way into the waves.

7. **Run with the sardines:** A spectacle that would rival East Africa's great wildebeest migration, takes place during the warm winter months. Watch as this legendary marine migration spawns a feeding frenzy amongst chasing game fish, gulls, pods of dolphins and humpback whales.

(594 words)

### **ABOUT TOURISM KWAZULU-NATAL**

Tourism KwaZulu-Natal is responsible for the development, promotion, and marketing of tourism into and within the province, both domestically and internationally. The organisation is an entity that reports to the provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

Website: <https://www.zulu.org.za>

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Instagram: Tourismkzn official

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Hashtags: #KZNHasItAll #Believelt

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