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Wildlife Officials Search for Tiger in Far East After Human Killed

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Wildlife officials in the Russian Far East are on a mission to track down a tiger believed to have mauled a 75-year-old hunter to death.

Pavel Fomenko, the coordinator of the Amur branch of the World Wildlife Fund, said in an online statement Monday that tracks near the man's body indicated that he had been killed by a tiger.

"What exactly served as the basis for the wild animal's behavior, whether it had gunshot or other wounds — this is not yet clear," Fomenko said in the statement.

Local hunters have said there are at least two other tigers in the region, a factor that Fomenko said will complicate efforts to find the animal behind the recent attack.

Human attacks by Amur tigers are extremely rare, according to the statement, which says that 90 percent of tiger attacks are somehow provoked by the human.

"But it is not necessarily the human that provoked the tiger that winds up the victim of the attack. It is enough to recall the tragedy in Bikinsk [in the Khabarovsk region], when a tiger wounded by a poacher attacked an innocent hunter and killed him," the statement said.

There are only an estimated 400 Amur tigers left in the wild, with most of them inhabiting Russia's Far East.

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