

# Kudu Awards celebrate conservationists

The South African National Parks (SANParks) supported by First National Bank (FNB) celebrated deserving conservationists for their contributions at the eighth annual Kudu Awards ceremony on 30 November 2012, at Gallagher Estates in Midrand.

According to Dr David Mabunda SANParks CEO, "The Kudu Awards is an important initiative that recognises external stakeholders for their contribution and internal stakeholders efforts in making South African National Parks the custodian of choice for the national parks system of South Africa, and also plays a significant role in the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage, thus protecting South Africa's most valuable national assets."

He said this awards programme aims at enhancing equitable and sustainable relationships with various external communities with a particular caring interest to the national parks of our country and conservation of our national heritage in general. "This gives meaning to the vision of 'SANParks Connecting to Society'."

A total of 13 finalists in four categories were announced, these include Corporate Contribution to Conservation Award, Environmental Media Contribution to Conservation, Community Contribution to Conservation and Environmental Education/Capacity Building.

The Lifetime Contribution Award (Chief Executive Officer's Awards) was awarded to Dr U. dv V. "Tol" Pienaar (posthumously), the former Chief Director of SANParks from 1987 until his retirement in 1991. He spent 35 years with SANParks, of those 32 were spent in Kruger National Park. Dr Mabunda said, "Dr Tol Pienaar ranks amongst those who have had the most influence in shaping the Kruger National Park into the world renowned conservation icon that it is today."

## Winners of the 2010 Kudu Awards in the respective categories are:

### Corporate Contribution to Conservation Award (Individual):

Afeefah Patel, a seven year old girl based in Johannesburg wrote a letter to President Jacob Zuma highlighting her concern about the plight of rhino in South Africa. Her letter did not only get the Presidents attention but also gave an impetus to a call for a campaign to unite against poaching. Her actions did not go unnoticed as SANParks celebrated her effort by declaring her the winner of this year's Corporate Contribution to Conservation Award (Individual).

### Corporate Contribution to Conservation Award (Group):

Gora Elephant Camp in Addo Elephant National Park in the Eastern Cape was awarded the Business Partner of the Year award.

### Corporate Contribution to Conservation Award (Profit Making Organisation):

The winner is Unitrans Volkswagen & Audi for their contribution to the fight against rhino poaching through their sustainable fundraising initiative Unite Against Poaching which has seen more than R5 million donated towards anti-poaching initiatives in the Kruger National Park.

### Environmental Media Contribution to Conservation (Best Journalist)

Tiara Walters from *Sunday Times* was awarded the Environmental Media Contribution to Conservation. She conducted her reporting in a socially responsible manner and has given extensive and balanced reporting on conservation related matters. Sheree Bega from *Saturday Star* received a Merit Award in this category.

## **Environmental Media Contribution to Conservation (Best Publication)**

The winner is *Getaway* Magazine for their extensive balanced and educational coverage of conservation and tourism issues.

## **Community Contribution to Conservation (Individual)**

The recipient of this award, John Nzira - Ukuvuna Community Training Centre contributed in the advancement of sustainable conservation of our biodiversity and cultural heritage in a number of rural communities which include Limpopo, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape.

## **Community Contribution to Conservation (Group)**

In the group sub-category, the Pretoria-based Mothong African Heritage and Northern Cape Department of Basic Education are the joint winners who both made significant contributions in environmental education and awareness in their respective communities.

## **Community Contribution to Conservation (Region)**

This is the SANParks Honorary Rangers (a volunteer organisation working in national parks) Awards. This year's winner is Pretoria/Tshwane Region of the SANParks Honorary Rangers. This region has been awarded for their sterling job in amongst others area integrity of the national parks, environmental education projects for disadvantaged communities and general fundraising projects.

## **Community Contribution to Conservation (Project of the Year)**

The second winner in the Honorary Rangers Awards is Nampak for the Project of the Year. Nampak is awarded for their contribution of baboon-proof rubbish bins and their assistance in the management of waste in the Kruger National Park.

## **Environmental Education/Capacity Building (Individual)**

In this sub-category Vernon Gibbs-Halls from Eden District Municipality in the Western Cape was recognised for his leadership role in the broader conservation field spanning over 20 years.

## **Environmental Education/Capacity Building (Group)**

This award was presented to The Jewish National Fund (Group) who has contributed to educational programmes in Mamelodi, Pretoria that further enhanced the value of conservation and biodiversity within an impoverished area.

The Awards also reward SANParks staff members including the Shield Award which was awarded to Graeme Ellis for his exceptional bravery in saving the life of a colleague while endangering his own life during a lion attack in Kgalagadi Transfrontier National Park.

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