

2017 Kudu Awards winners announced

The 13th annual SANParks Kudu Awards ceremony was held at the CSIR Convention Centre in Pretoria on Thursday, 23 November, recognising conservationists for their contribution to the protection of the environment in SA.



CEO Special Award winner Ronnie Steinbrucker.

As part of the awards SANParks board chairperson Joanne Yawitch bestowed a Lifetime Contribution Award to Ananias Jamie Mulhovo from the Kruger National Park. Mulhovo joined SANParks in 1971 as a general worker in technical services. Mulhovo was later assigned to the Skukuza Camp maintenance team in 1998 where he continued to serve the camp with distinction until his retirement last month.

“When you enjoy your job like I do, time flies. I cannot believe that I have been in the park for so many decades... seeing the lifetime achievement award and certificate is proof that I have received this prestigious honour,” said Mulhovo.

SANParks CEO Fundisile Mketeni also bequeathed two CEO Special Awards to Dr Freek Venter of the Kruger National Park and Ronnie Steinbrucker of Table Mountain National Park for the impact they have had in their various operations of SANParks. This year’s winners have spent over three decades each of unbroken and loyal service in the employ of SANParks.



CEO Special Award winner Dr Freek Venter

Winners of the 2017 Kudu Awards in the respective categories are:

Associated Partners: Carlos Lopez Pereira from National Administration of Conservation Areas for his enormous support to anti-poaching efforts in the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

Business Partner of the Year: For best year-on-year business growth and financial contribution to SANParks, Lukimbi Safari Lodge in the Kruger National Park was awarded the Best Business Partner of the Year for the 2016/2017 financial year.

Corporate Contribution (NPO): Cape Town Environmental Education Trust in recognition of the trust's commitment and wide reach in developing young people and also imparting environmental knowledge to different communities and schools in Cape Town and surroundings.

Environmental Media, Best Journalist: *Forbes Africa* magazine's Jay Cabez for his immense contribution to the dissemination of environmental, conservation and eco-tourism information through the use of print media.

Community Contribution to Conservation: Twin Mosia from Elandskop Museum / VKB, Free State in recognition of the trust's commitment and wide reach in developing young people and also imparting environmental knowledge to different communities in Mamafubedu / Pieter Stuyt and surroundings.

Individual Contribution: Vincent van der Merwe from Endangered Wildlife Trust for his contribution to conservation through the growing of the cheetah population in and outside the national parks system.

Women in Conservation: Petro Botha from Cape Town Environmental Education Trust for contribution to sustainable

conservation of fynbos through ground-breaking research on using the Eland as a management tool (as opposed to fire) to conserve the vegetation of the Cape Flats.

Youth in Conservation:

- Gerhard de Beer from Starke Ayres for his contribution to conservation through sourcing of funds, volunteering for rhino preservation, as well as using personal time assisting in the processing of rhino carcasses in the Kruger National Park.
- Reginald Christiaan for his contribution to conservation through his Scorpion Project to raise awareness on the ecology and diversity of this understudied Arachnida fauna of the Namaqualand.

Honorary Ranger Best Region of the Year:

- Diamantveld Region (small region) for achieving the highest growth rate amongst all 31 SANParks Honorary Rangers regions in the areas of membership growth, growth in transformation, environmental education and total contribution to SANParks.
- Lowveld Region (large region) for achieving the highest growth rate amongst all 31 SANParks Honorary Rangers regions in the areas of membership growth, growth in transformation, environmental education and total contribution to SANParks.

Honorary Ranger Best Project of the Year: KNP Birding Weekend for outstanding volunteer service by running 76 trails camps per year to raise funds for SANParks.

Environmental Education / Capacity Building Award:

- Mike Kendrick from Wild Shots Outreach Programme for his commitment and wide reach in developing young people and also imparting environmental knowledge to different communities and schools in Hoedspruit, Limpopo.
- Nxanguyintswa Primary School (Limpopo), Milo Primary School (Mpumalanga), and Masoyi Home-Based Care (Mpumalanga) for the schools' efforts to conserve the environment through practising organic farming in support of local communities and leading with greening projects.

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