

Awards create awareness of rhino conservation

The Rhino Conservation Awards 2014, held in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Affairs of South Africa and the Game Rangers' Association of Africa (GRAA), took place on 31 July at the Montecasino Ballroom in Fourways, Johannesburg.



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The annual Rhino Conservation Awards were first held in 2012, having been founded by Dr Larry Hansen, in an effort to create awareness of rhino conservation issues while recognising exceptional individuals and organisations for their efforts in protecting Africa's rhino population.

This year, nominations were invited from African Rhino Range States in five categories, namely Best Field Ranger, Best Conservation Practitioner, Best Political & Judicial Support, Best Science Research & Technology and Best Awareness, Education or Funding.

Category winners

The winner in the Best Field Ranger category was Mpho Malongwa, working at Wilderness Safaris Botswana. The runner up was Amos Mzimba, while Wilson Siwela was elected as second runner up, both of whom are field ranger sergeants at the Kruger National Park (KNP). In the Best Conservation Practitioner category, the winner was Lawrence Munro from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. Second place went to Rob Thomson, Section Ranger at KNP, while third place went to Jack Greeff, security officer for Ntomeni Ranger Services.

The winner of the Best Political and Judicial Support category was Botswana's president, Seretse Khama Ian Khama. The runner up was law practitioner, Coert Jordaan, and second runner up was Lovemore Mangwashu of the Lowveld Rhino Trust in Zimbabwe.

In the Best Science, Research and Technology category, the winner was Saving the Survivors from Onderstepoort, with Colonel (Rtd) Chris Serfontein from the CSIR coming in second place and wildlife veterinarian, Dr William Fowlds, in third

place. The winner of the final category, Best Awareness, Education and Funding was the SANParks Honorary Rangers, Counter Poaching Region. The runner up in this category was the Southern African Wildlife College, while rhino awareness ambassador and African explorer, Kingsley Holgate, was second runner up.

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