

# 2018 SANParks Kudu Awards winners announced

South African National Parks (SANParks) recently held its 14th Kudu Awards ceremony celebrating its employees, as well as multiple stakeholders who play a pivotal role in strengthening conservation in South Africa.



Kudu Awards Innovation winner South African Wildlife College K9 Unit, Johan van Straaten

“Innovation is one of the ways that we will and are able to better protect our national parks be it through anti-poaching efforts or finding solutions to climate change. If we don’t innovate we run the risk of losing our natural heritage. Tonight we honour several innovators who are leading the way in the conservation of our natural world,” said SANParks CEO Fundisile Mketeni at the event.

Facing some of the toughest challenges to conservation, innovation and technology won top honours at the Kudu Awards, indicative of the work being done using innovative technology to combat poaching and tackle wildlife crime.

## 2018 Kudu Awards winners:

- **Innovation:** The Meerkat Project Team: SANParks; Peace Parks Foundation; CSIR and Southern African Wildlife College’s K9 Unit
- **Associated Partners:** Untouched Adventure and Tip Publishing’s Arnold Ras
- **Media Contribution to Eco-tourism:** ENCA’s Christelle du Toit and Bafana Yende for TV; SABC’s Suzanne Paxton for radio and the *Herald* and *Weekend Post*’s Guy Rodgers for print.
- **Environmental Education:** Luggedlane Primary School (Ehlanzeni) and Runner up Basopa High School (Giyani).
- **Community Contribution to Conservation:** Collin Louw (Khomani San) from the South African San Council.
- **Women in Conservation:** Andrea Von Gunten from Cape Town Environmental Education Trust.
- **Professional Stakeholders:** Adeline Manake and the Eskom Malelane Customer Network Centre.
- **Individual Contribution to Conservation:** Cedric Coetzee from Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife.
- **Non-Profit Making Institution Contribution:** DAKTARI Bush School & Wildlife Orphanage and Korsman Conservancy.
- **Business Partner of the Year:** Rhino Walking Safari
- **Honorary Ranger Best Region of the Year:** Large Region – West Rand; Small Region - Bankenveld
- **Honorary Ranger Best Project of the Year:** The National Training Committee



Kudu Awards Innovation winners Mberkat Project representatives Andre le Roux, CSIR and Kathy Bergs, Peace Parks Foundation

The lifetime achievement award went to Robert Phoku for 44 years' service to SANParks. Phoku started with SANParks as a Tipper driver in 1974. Since 2004, Phoku has been the dedicated driver for all Kruger National Park Management Committee tours inside the park. "We thank him for his hard work, reliability and dedication to the organisation which is exemplary," said Mketeni.

A total of 29 Chief Executive Awards were given out this year ranging from the Shield Award, Best Customer Service, Best Constituency Builder, Best Ranger Post, Best Performing Camp, Best Performing Park of the Year, Best Performing Entrance Gate/ Reception, Excellent Performance in the workplace, Overall Best Performer, Best Performing Division, Best Leadership Award, CEO Special Award to the Website Community Choice Award.

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