

2020 Rhino Conservation Awards winners revealed

On Friday, 31 July - also celebrated as World Ranger Day, the winners of the Rhino Conservation Awards were announced during an online event. The awards, which recognises the conservation efforts of people and organisations in Africa, this year broadened its focus to include those working in endangered species conservation.



"What better way to celebrate World Ranger Day than recognising the incredible efforts of these rangers and those who support them. Well done to those nominated, the finalists and, of course, the winners. You all continue to inspire us!" said Andrew Campbell, CEO, Game Rangers Association of Africa.

The winners, selected by evaluation of the work done over the last 12 months starting in July 2019, are as follows:

Best Field Ranger

Winner: Samuel Loware of Uganda Wildlife Authority. Because of his effective monitoring and data collection skills, Loware has made a significant impact on the increase of both giraffe and lion populations in the Kidepo Valley National Park. He is now conducting habitat assessments for the reintroduction of rhino into Kidepo, and other translocations of wildlife to ensure the conservation of these key species.

First runner up: Julius Kaputo of Conservation Lower Zambezi, Zambia

Second runner up: Losas Lanamunyi of Northern Rangelands Trust, Kenya

Best Game Ranger

Winner: Don English of South African National Parks for his outstanding leadership in the Kruger National Park where against all odds, through sheer tenacity and persistence and with the support of his ranger teams, he has managed to lower rhino poaching activities year on year in the Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ).

First runner up: Benson Kanyembo of Conservation South Luangwa, Zambia

Second runner up: Albert Smith of South African National Parks, South Africa

Best Conservation Practitioner

Winner: SANParks Kruger National Park Airwing. This dedicated team of committed professionals work tirelessly to

support rangers, veterinarians and researchers in protecting, saving, conserving and monitoring endangered species within the Kruger National Park and neighbouring protected areas. These pilots and their support staff are instrumental in many of the counter-poaching successes in the area.

First runner up: SANParks Marula South (IPZ) Rangers, South Africa

Second runner up: Eastern Cape DEDEAT Green Scorpions, South Africa

Best Conservation Supporter

Winner: Lynne Taylor – The Tashinga Initiative. Taylor's targeted initiatives ensuring rangers receive the support necessary to perform optimally have transformed the well-being and operational capabilities of the rangers in the Zambezi Valley. This enables them to function effectively and supports their extraordinary work in conservation and on-going protection of threatened species in Zimbabwe.

First runner up: SANParks Environmental Crime Investigators, South Africa

Second runner up: WWF South Africa – Wildlife Programme, Southern Africa

"This year has seen an incredible list of worthy candidates and having been involved since the inception of the awards, this has been the hardest to adjudicate on so far. Thanks to all those who took the time to write-up the nominations of these special people who deserve recognition as in most cases, they themselves would not have done so as the work that they do is passion driven and for a greater good," said Chris Galliers, president of the International Ranger Federation and a judge of the 2020 awards.

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