

Celebrating Africa's
UNSUNG HEROES

Rangers and conservationists rightly deserve recognition for protecting the wildlife and wild places we love to see on safari: their work demands courage, commitment and resilience in often difficult or even life-threatening circumstances. We highlight recent award-winners from across the continent and celebrate their inspiring leadership and dedication.

TUSK CONSERVATION AWARDS

The British-based charity Tusk helps fund conservation projects across Africa. Its annual awards in London (www.tuskawards.com), now in their 12th year, are presented by its patron HRH The Prince of Wales. The 2024 winners included:

NOMBA GANAMÉ
(MALI)

THE 2024 PRINCE WILLIAM AWARD FOR CONSERVATION IN AFRICA

Nomba Ganamé won this lifetime achievement award for his dedicated work as Head of Field Operations for the Mali Elephant Project. He's faced some tough challenges in this volatile region, among them conflict, trafficking and poaching, but has resolutely believed in the power of local communities to help protect desert elephants and their habitats. His 'elephant-centred' model of landscape restoration benefits both pachyderms and local livelihoods.

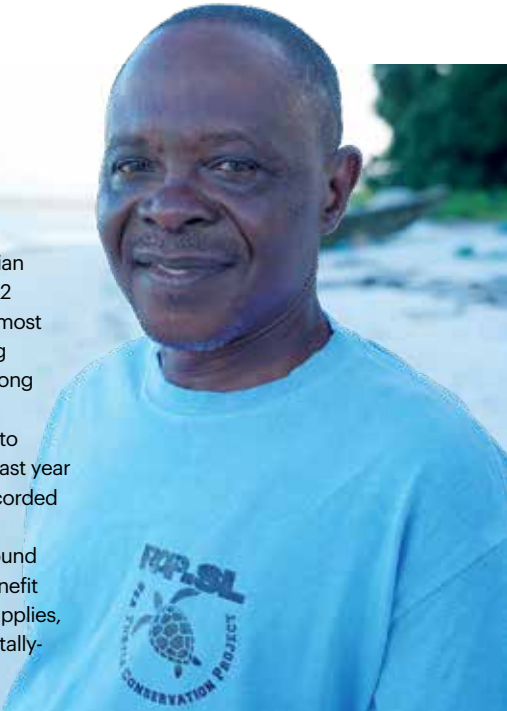


Empowering 'eco-guardians' to protect habitats and migratory routes, he encourages grassroots, community-led environmental management involving 16 communes across 60,000sq km, where people and recovering wildlife populations peacefully coexist. "My advice to the next generation is to have total commitment to community conservation,

to listen to the local population and to demonstrate impartiality in their dealings," Ganamé commented. "Conservation takes a lot of time and energy and if you put the money first, it's difficult to succeed."

EDWARD ARUNA
(SIERRA LEONE)

THE 2024 TUSK AWARD FOR CONSERVATION IN AFRICA
Edward founded the Reptile and Amphibian Programme-Sierra Leone (RAP-SL) in 2012 and has since become the country's foremost authority for marine conservation. Raising awareness and reducing indifference among communities towards turtle species, his initiatives have included engaging locals to monitor nesting beaches and by-catch. Last year alone this led to 110 turtle nests being recorded across 18 communities, with 3652 turtles successfully hatched of all five species found along the Atlantic coast. Local people benefit too, with his initiatives providing water supplies, schools, solar electricity and environmentally-friendly fish-drying ovens and kilns.



FOTEMUS FILMS (3)

CLAVER NTOYINKIMA
(RWANDA)

THE 2024 TUSK WILDLIFE RANGER AWARD WINNER
Growing up just outside Nyungwe National Park, Claver's love of the forest, its birds and wildlife began in childhood. Today he demonstrates his lifelong commitment to conservation as Nyungwe's Senior Ranger Guide and Trainer, having worked as a guide, in anti-poaching, primate habituation, mentoring and training. He founded community guide training initiatives and youth conservation groups, including the Nyungwe Kids Birding Club in 2009, thereby establishing vital links between the park and local people, inspiring their interest in the natural world and earning their respect and admiration.

WORLD FEMALE RANGER AWARDS

Established in 2021 by Holly Budge, founder of World Female Ranger Week (www.worldfemalerangerweek.org), these awards highlight the role women play in protecting wildlife and emphasise the importance of gender equality in conservation.



WORLD FEMALE RANGER AWARDS

RAABIA HAWA
(KENYA)

2024 WORLD FEMALE RANGER AWARD WINNER
In 2014, Raabia Hawa left her world as a Kenyan media personality to become founder of Ulinzi Africa Foundation (UAF), protecting the Tana Delta Ecosystem from extensive

poaching. East Africa's first non-profit focusing on ranger welfare, her unit patrols this critical UNESCO RAMSAR site, safeguarding elephants, rhinos, lions, giraffes, sea turtles and other species by removing snares, caring for injured animals, tracking poachers and collaborating with local communities.

THE GAME RANGERS' ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA CONSERVATION AWARDS 2024

GRAA (www.conservationawards.africa) supports rangers through the provision of best practice guidance, equipment, skills training and more, in countries across the continent. On a sobering note, the association reported 64 ranger deaths in the line of duty last year.

MODIKI CLAVER
(CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC)

BEST FIELD RANGER AWARD

Modiki leads ranger teams in Dzanga Sangha Protected Area's law enforcement section in CAR, as well as contributing to scientific research in the field. During CAR's conflicts in 2013, he covertly tracked rebel movements, providing crucial information to protect wildlife.



ALICE PÉRETÉ / CHENGETA WILDLIFE



CHANEL HAUETTE
(SOUTH AFRICA)

BEST MARINE RANGER AWARD

Working in Robberg Nature Reserve and Marine Protected Area, Chanel manages hundreds of annual strandings — among them seals, birds and turtles — as coordinator of the Plett Stranding Network. She often stabilises animals at her own home, working closely with local businesses, NGOs and residents for support.



EDWARD SELFE

JANET SAKARA
(ZAMBIA)

2024 WORLD FEMALE RANGER LEADERSHIP AWARD

As a member of Zambia's highly successful Conservation South Luangwa (CSL) K9 Unit, Janet Sakara has been a key player, spearheading over 150 operations that led to 47 arrests and the confiscation of 52 firearms. Her work in fighting the illegal wildlife trade bridges local communities and the conservation efforts of CSL, building trust between them while proving that women can drive impactful change.



SOUTH LUANGWA RAPID RESPONSE UNIT
(ZAMBIA)

BEST RANGER TEAM AWARD

Conservation South Luangwa's Rapid Response Unit for Human-Wildlife Conflict improves coexistence between communities and wildlife. They protect crops from elephant raids, avert predator attacks on livestock by using non-lethal deterrents and stronger enclosures, and raise awareness through educational outreach for over 4000 people.

MUNENE KAMUNDI
(KENYA)

BEST RANGER SUPPORTER AWARD

Through his Stronger Ranger Initiative, Munene strives to improve ranger wellbeing in issues involving mental health, safety practices and emergency response training, aiming to support 5000 annually across Africa.

