



HANES LOCHNER

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“Male lions are typified by their luxuriant manes. The mane signals a male’s genetic prowess.”

PAUL FUNSTON
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Greater Kruger National Park



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Colours of the Kalahari is a photographic celebration of this beautiful desert. We have an autographed copy up for grabs. To stand a chance of winning it, simply send an e-mail with your name and answer to the question to competition@tipafrica.co.za (subject line: Kalahari) or send a postcard to Colours of the Kalahari Competition, PO Box 308, Woodstock, 7915, before 31 July 2010.

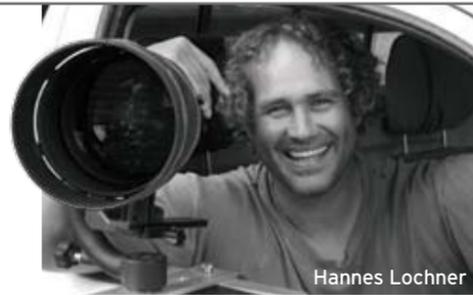
Q: Which animal appears on the cover of Hannes Lochner's latest book?

READING matters

Photographer Hannes Lochner lives the life many of us dream of, spending up to two years camping in remote wildernesses to capture the pictures for his books. Before this nature lover became a river and field guide, he trained as graphic designer and in his latest book, *Colours of the Kalahari*, his artist's eye is in evidence. Here are five of his all-time favourite reads.

Roberts Birds of Southern Africa by PAR Hockey, WRJ Dean and PG Ryan (John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, R790) I did birding trips with Phil Hockey in Namibia for about three years and consider him the authority. This book answers every question you'll ever have on bird life in Southern Africa.

Ecological Intelligence: Rediscovering Ourselves in Nature by Ian McCallum (Africa Geographic, R150) For a fresh, new approach to the environmental issues we face you can't beat this book. Ian McCallum argues that we have to think differently about ourselves and the Earth if we want wilderness areas, wild animals and humankind to survive.



Hannes Lochner

The Kalahari: Survival in a Thirstland Wilderness by Nigel Dennis (Struik, available second-hand) The Kgalagadi has always been my favourite park in South Africa and Nigel Dennis is a magician behind a camera, especially when he makes use of flash photography.

The Art of Nature by Heinrich van den Berg (R350, available from www.hphpublishing.co.za) One of my favourite books by one of my favourite photographers. Heinrich van den Berg brings an artistic touch to wildlife photography in a work that combines pictures and poetry.

The Complete Book of Southern African Mammals by Gus Mills and Lex Hes (Struik, R535) Undoubtedly one of the best African mammal publications of all time. The photography by Lex Hes is brilliant.

The Fitz Turns 50

It's a milestone year for the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology at the University of Cape Town. In the past five decades, the institute has risen to great prominence and ornithology is now ranked as an internationally competitive scientific discipline in South Africa. It's also thanks to the Fitz that the birder's bible, *Roberts Birds*, was completely updated. Looking forward, the institute wants to raise R5 million to provide bursaries. For more on the 50th anniversary, visit www.fitzpatrick.uct.ac.za. Go to www.wildcard.co.za for an interview with the director of the institute and *Wild's* birding guru, Professor Phil Hockey.



Snap the Arid Parks and snap up a prize

HOT THINGS to do this winter

When the rest of the country is in the grips of the winter chill, the parks of the dry and dramatic Northern Cape are at their most pleasant. Head off for hiking, river rafting, mountain biking and game tracking ... and don't forget your camera. Your picture could be published in a coffee-table

book and put you in the running for prizes worth R250 000. For a shot at fame and fortune, upload your pictures of the arid parks (Vlei-Vleis/Richtersveld, Augrabies Falls, Kgalagadi, Mokala, Namaqua and Tankwa Karoo) plus the story behind the pictures to www.capturedexperiences.com.

ARID BEAUTY
Gorgeous clouds in Tankwa Karoo National Park.

KARIN SCHERBRUCKER



My Wild Card ESCAPE

Wild Cardholder Andrew Stewart says: "I use my Wild Card to go to Tokai Forest, Cape Point and Silvermine, where I train for events such as the Iron-Man 70.3. It's such a pleasure to cycle on roads without any traffic

and the beautiful scenery makes even the most gruelling training sessions pleasurable. On weekends I like to cycle to the top of Silvermine to watch the sun rise over the city. It's my favourite spot."



SPOT THIS

African white-stinkwood (*Celtis Africana*)

This large beautiful tree has unusually pale bark that is relatively smooth. Its size, bark and classical upright shape is how you'll identify it. Look for it along rivers and in other warm, but damp, areas.

Even though they drop their leaves in winter, you can still easily identify these trees from their characteristic bark and shape. Remember to visit our monthly Wild About Trees blog at www.wildcard.co.za

Sweet-thorn acacia (*Acacia karoo*)

South Africa's most ubiquitous tree, the sweet-thorn is easy to recognise even without leaves as it has large striking white thorns. It is often found in clumps of dozens of trees and along roads.



ILLUSTRATIONS: SAPHI TREE SPOTTING - PENNY HOALLE AND JOAN VAN GOGH



ALBERT FRONEMAN

Greater double-collared sunbirds are drawn by flowering aloes.

GURU: Albert Froneman's pictures feature in top birding publications and have been selected for the BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. With colleague Chris van Rooyen, also an award-winning photographer, he runs wildlife photo safaris in Kruger, Kgalagadi and more. www.wildlifephotography.co.za

BIRDING beat BY ALBERT FRONEMAN

The chilly winter season is certainly not a time to pack away your bird guide and binoculars. Seek out the milder climate of KwaZulu-Natal and you'll be rewarded with great sightings.

Game reserves such as Hluhluwe, iMfolozi, Mkhuze and the greater iSimangaliso Wetland Park in the Zululand region are all superb for bird watching during the drier winter season. In the forests and wooded valleys, be on the lookout for mixed bird parties. Many of the insectivorous bird species tend to group together in a mixed flock for feeding, taking advantage of safety in numbers. As these small flocks move through the foliage, they also cause greater disturbance than a single bird, improving the chance of finding food.

In Mkhuze and Ndumo, focus your attention on the sand forest areas and be on the lookout for the endemic Rudd's apalis, the brightly coloured gorgeous bush-shrike and the elusive eastern nicator. Any flowering trees could potentially be a feeding ground for the small endemic Neergaard's sunbird. Open sandy patches along the

sand forest edge should be checked for the pretty little pink-throated twinspots.

A guided walk through the fig forest in Mkhuze is a must in the early morning and if you are lucky you will spot the secretive green malkoha and the noisy trumpeter hornbills. The ultimate find will be a roosting Pel's fishing owl.

Umlalazi Nature Reserve and the small town of Mtunzini are home to several pairs of palmnut vultures that feed on and nest in the raffia palms planted in and around the town many years ago. The Umlalazi estuary is also home to the rare mangrove kingfisher during the winter months.

All across the Midlands and foothills of the Drakensberg, the landscape is dotted with flowering aloes. Not only do the aloes add colour to an otherwise drab landscape, but they also provide a source of food and energy to many bird species. Sunbirds, bulbuls, weavers and starlings all feast on the nectar. Malachite, greater double-collared and amethyst sunbirds are sometimes seen feeding together on a single aloe!

Knowing these pale forms are moving about in the night sends tingles of fear down the spine.



HANNES LOCHNER

SECRET WEAPON In confrontations, the mane can make a male seem bigger, an excellent form of intimidation.

Once lions are reintroduced in an area, the feel of the place changes. Knowing these pale forms are moving about in the night sends tingles of fear down the spine. Somehow they connect us to our long distant past and make us sharply aware of our own mortality.

Hunting is a significant feature of pride life and is a collective effort aimed at maximising the chances of catching prey. Hunting methods and preference of prey species is a nurtured skill lions learn from their mothers.

In many areas behaviour differs remarkably, depending on the most abundant prey available. In some instances lions resort to killing bigger prey such as elephant or hippo to survive because, during certain times of the year, there is a lack of easier pickings. The rewards of killing larger prey are usually worth the risks, because it feeds the pride for long periods of time.

Lion prides in Chobe, and in particular Savuti, have become proficient in hunting elephants and even attack full grown hippos. In Duba Plains in Botswana, where buffalo are the preferred prey, I have witnessed lions as young as one year old being active and in fact initiating buffalo hunts.

During the making of the film *Royal Blood: Life and Death in an African Lion Pride*, I spent many hours with a pride of lions whose core territory area was the Munshe Dam north of Lower Sabie in Kruger. There were three adult females in the pride, raising seven cubs. During the dry season, when huge aggregations of wildebeest and zebra gathered there, this pride killed exclusively by ambushing animals that came to drink at the waterhole, taking advantage of either a large log or a termite mound to launch their attacks.

The remarkable aspect of this daytime hunting set-up was that the animals coming to drink were obviously aware lions were lying in wait. They milled around some distance away while the numbers grew as new herds arrived. Eventually a few brave animals would make their way to the water. When they began drinking in apparent safety, the rest moved down, until the waterhole was crowded. The lionesses then exploded from cover, causing panic that resulted in huge clouds of dust and animals slipping in the water. In the confusion and chaos, the hunters selected their victim.

In the 60s and 70s I visited Kruger whenever possible, often leaving after work on a Friday and sleeping outside