

The *Beauty,* *Wonder,* and *Wilderness* of Africa



Andy Rouse, www.andyrouse.co.uk / NBP Awards 2013

African Wildlife Foundation partners with Nature's Best Photography to showcase Africa in a way that words can't always convey

It's not always easy to explain AWF's work or why we must protect Africa's wildlife and wild lands. That's where photography comes in. Where words fail us, a stirring photo—of a lone giraffe showcased in a burst of sun from the heavens or an aardvark relishing its termite snack—easily brings home the beauty, wonder, and wilderness of Africa. It's one of the reasons why AWF sponsors the "African Wildlife" category of the Nature's Best Photography Windland Smith Rice International Awards each year: so those who may never have the chance to step foot on the African continent may enjoy its wildlife—and be compelled to save it.

Following is a sneak peak at the winning photo and a few of the highly honored entries from the "African Wildlife" category before they hit the walls of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History for the official Nature's Best exhibition later this year. We think you'll agree that they make a pretty good case for why conservation in Africa is important!

MEMBER BENEFIT

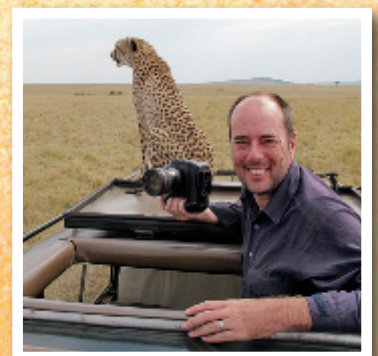
Keep an eye on your mailbox: As a benefit of being an African Wildlife Foundation member, you'll soon receive our exclusive 2014 – 2015 calendar, featuring Nature's Best images such as those found in this supplement!

CATEGORY WINNER: Masai Giraffe Silhouette

Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya
By Andy Rouse, *Caerphilly, Wales, UK*

Fifteen years ago, Andy Rouse left corporate life to become a full-time professional wildlife photographer. He is now known the world over for his ability to capture moments from the lives of mammals and birds in the wild from a different viewpoint—often "up close and personal" with some of the world's most fascinating wildlife. "I love animals first and foremost; that love transcends my photography, which is merely a tool to express my passion for nature to the outside world," he says.

"Late one afternoon a ray of sun burst through the clouds—it was incredible. But I could not find anything to put in the foreground. Just when I needed them, the elephants, giraffes, and interesting trees were nowhere to be seen. Eventually, just as I was about to burst with frustration, a young giraffe strode over the hill and made all my dreams come true."



Dickson Sadler



Gabriela Staebler, www.gabrielastaebler.de / NBP Awards 2013

Lion at Moru Kopje Area

Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

By Gabriela Staebler, Schondorf, Germany

"One day while on safari, we discovered a male lion lying flat next to a huge, round boulder. Just a few minutes before we had to return to camp, the lion woke up. He rolled onto his other side and went back to sleep. Luckily, I got the picture I had in my mind. The boulder looked as though it could roll over the lion at any minute, yet the lion looked relaxed and completely fearless. It was as if he could stop the rock with his paw if necessary."



Leopard

South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

By Will Burrard-Lucas, London, UK

"Here, a curious young buggy with a DSLR of a year spent in Zambia I deployed it nearby"

Cheetah and Cub

Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya

By *Marco Urso, Milano, Italy*

"I followed a mother cheetah and her cub for almost two days as they traveled through the tall grass. The whole time, either the light or the position was wrong for photos. Then, at the end of the second day, my patience paid off. The cub began to interact with the mother, who closed her eyes and bowed her head. We often see a mother's love toward her cubs, but in this case we can see a cub's love for mom."



Marco Urso, www.photoplorica.com / NBP Awards 2013



Will Burrend-Lucas, www.burrend-lucas.com / NBP Awards 2013

ing leopard investigates BeetleCam—my remote-controlled, armored camera mounted inside. I got to know this leopard well over the course of a year in Zambia. She was very playful and would always approach BeetleCam if I was nearby. I particularly like the eye contact in this photo."



African Elephants

Mike Dexter, www.mikedexter.com / NBP Awards 2013

Mashatu Game Reserve, Botswana

By *Mike Dexter, Durban, South Africa*

"A matriarch hesitated briefly at the water's edge before striding forward. Then, a frantic frenzy followed as the rest of the herd surged forward. The scene became a writhing mass of gargantuan, muddied brown bodies. Trumpets, rumbles, and screams of joy vibrated through the air around me. I wanted to capture an image that conveyed the exuberance of the moment and illustrated the central role water plays in the lives of these incredible animals."



Aardvark

Samara Private Game Reserve,
South Africa

By Etienne Oosthuizen,
Harare, Zimbabwe

“The Karoo is a flat expanse that lies between Johannesburg and Cape Town. It is a unique habitat ... [with] a variety of species that fill the guide books but are hardly ever seen. There’s plenty of evidence of aardvark along the roads, but normally they only come out at night to feed on their favorite food: termites. This particular photo was an instant favorite of mine. Not only was the aardvark out in the daylight hours, but it had also caught the scent of photographers nearby and yet continued on his hunt. It was a great opportunity for us to observe him dig and feed.”

Etienne Oosthuizen, www.photographicfrica.com / NBP Awards 2013



Hilton Kotze, www.hiltonkotze.co.za / NBP Awards 2013

Baboon and Babies

Greater Kruger Area, South Africa
By Hilton Kotze, White River,
South Africa

“I was traveling in the greater Kruger area when I came across a troop of baboons on an isolated dirt road. They were very entertaining, and I spent some time watching them. It is interesting how their behaviors are so close to human mannerisms. I managed to get a shot as this mother lovingly lifted up her baby.”



Kalyan Varma, www.kalyanvarma.net / NBP Awards 2013

Cheetah Hunt

Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya
By Kalyan Varma, Bangalore, India

“As we were watching a cheetah with her litter of three cubs, she spotted a group of grazing gazelles. Leaving her cubs near our vehicle, she dashed after the gazelles and eventually made a kill. I decided to underexpose the shot because I knew that this would be my only chance to capture the action. From the series of shots that I took, this is my favorite because most of the animals are in the air, and I can see the cheetah steering with its long tail.”

There’s still time to enter!

Send in your favorite safari photos to the 2014 Windland Smith Rice International Awards, open through June.



Visit awf.org/naturesbest to enter