



## LEAP INTO ACTION THIS 28 FEBRUARY

20<sup>th</sup> February 2015

*Start*

The third annual **Leap Day for Frogs** is back by popular demand on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 and is being coordinated by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) following the success of the 2014 national awareness day for frogs. The aim of the day is to celebrate the incredible diversity of frogs, raise awareness about these interesting animals and highlight the fact that amphibians are globally the most threatened of all vertebrates, including in South Africa, where 30% of our frog species are Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable.

"The idea behind the day is to get as many individuals, organisations, companies and especially schools throughout South Africa involved in creating their own events. Whether these take a more serious format, such as a local river or wetland clean-up, or just having fun in the name of frogs by dressing in green, is up to you. 2014 saw at least 30 events taking place across the country, and this year is set to far exceed that" explains Dr Jeanne Tarrant, the EWT's Threatened Amphibian Programme Manager.

South Africa is home to some 120 species of frogs, each with their own fascinating life-histories, habitats and behaviours. The awareness campaign aims to put frogs on South Africa's conservation map by providing information on what people, businesses and government can do towards reducing their negative impact on amphibian habitats, as well as how they can create environments that are conducive to the survival of frogs, including in their own back garden.

The campaign is being driven by Dr. Jeanne Tarrant, manager of the EWT's Threatened Amphibian Programme, and post-doctoral fellow with the North-West University. Said Tarrant, "The effectiveness of conservation of frogs is linked to how people perceive them, and unfortunately this is often in a negative light, particularly in countries like South Africa, where many superstitions are associated with these creatures. If we are to effectively conserve this group, we need the public to get on our side. Leap Day for Frogs aims to highlight a serious issue, which many people are unaware of, but also to have some good froggie fun!"

Jeanne herself will be involved in several events on the day: during the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup> she will be at Memorial Park, Kloof in collaboration with the Kloof Conservancy, for a family outing including kids activities, an illustrated presentation and a guided walk through the park to find, hear and identify frogs. Other activities will be taking place in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Potchefstroom, Hogsback and Durban. An exciting addition to this year's activities is a national frog art competition,

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

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encouraging children to put pen, koki or crayon to paper and get creative. Winning entries will be submitted to an international competition later in the year. See [www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za](http://www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za) for more information on events near you.

The EWT Threatened Amphibian Programme would like to thank our sponsors and partners who are helping promote the event, including Kloof Conservancy, Spar (Kloof), WESSA Eco-Schools Programme, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, uShaka SeaWorld (SAAMBR), Ireland Davenport, Longmynd Art Gallery (Hillcrest), TOADNUTS and the many individuals who have taken it upon themselves to organise events for the day. "It is fantastic to see scientists, teachers, conservationists and communities coming together to raise awareness about this important topic and avert the otherwise inevitable future for amphibians" said Tarrant.

For further information about the EWT-TAP and Leap Day for Frogs visit [www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za/www.ewt.org.za](http://www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za/www.ewt.org.za) or contact Jeanne Tarrant on [jeannet@ewt.org.za](mailto:jeannet@ewt.org.za).

*End.*

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