



## RHINO DAY 2015 SPEECH COMPETITION

21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

Start

Following the success of the *Rhino Day - 2014 School Speech Competition*, The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) together with the Responsible Tourism Foundation and Timbavati Bush School are jointly coordinating the second annual *Rhino Day - 2015 School Speech Competition*- to be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2015 in the Limpopo province, to mark World Rhino Day which is widely being celebrated on 22 September 2015. The theme for 2015 is “Not on our watch”.

This year the event will be supported by 25 schools and leaders from the local community and will take place at the Wits Rural Facility in the Bushbuckridge region of Limpopo. The facility is situated near the Orpen Gate of the Kruger National Park.

The competition will give school learners a platform to put ideas, plans, and strategies together and get creative. Learners will also get the opportunity to inform their peers as to how the poaching crisis affects them and present possible solutions. It furthermore serves as a platform to enable them to educate their own communities about the plight of rhino.

The winning school and learner will be announced on Monday 28 September 2015 on the EWT website [www.ewt.org.za](http://www.ewt.org.za). An exciting addition to this year’s activity will include a talk from the 2014 winner, Success Ngobeni, about his experiences at the First World Youth Rhino Summit in Hluhluwe-impfolozi Park, and how the competition changed his perception of rhinos.

South Africa is home to the world’s largest rhino population and has been the worst affected by rhino poaching and the illegal trade of rhino horn. Rhinos are a national asset and a part of our natural heritage which brings in jobs and investments through tourism.

To curb rhino poaching, the EWT’s Rhino project works with multiple stakeholders from conservation authorities, local communities and law enforcement officials to address rhino poaching and conserve rhinos in the wild through projects that:

- Reduce smuggling of rhino parts through the deployment of sniffer dogs at airports and at private reserves;
- Upskill law enforcement officials in wildlife trade and crime related issues;
- Support provincial conservation agencies and selected private reserves with fuel and equipment;
- Rehabilitate orphaned rhino calves and treat injured adult rhino in the field;

**Physical Address:** Building K2, Ardeer Road, Pinelands Office Park,  
Modderfontein 1609, Gauteng, South Africa

**Postal Address:** Private Bag X 11, Modderfontein 1645, Gauteng, South Africa

**Tel:** +27 (0) 11 372 3600 **Fax:** +27 (0) 11 608 4682 **E-mail:** [ewt@ewt.org.za](mailto:ewt@ewt.org.za) **Web:** [www.ewt.org.za](http://www.ewt.org.za)

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.

**NPO Number:** 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature  
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



- Raise awareness among state prosecutors and magistrates of wildlife crime and penalties through face-to-face meetings;
- Raise awareness in local communities of the impact of rhino poaching on livelihoods and security;
- Support private rhino owners and game reserve managers to improve reserve security through the development and dissemination of the Rhino Security Booklet;

Said Kirsty Brebner, the EWT's Rhino Project manager: "The effectiveness of rhino conservation is linked to collaboration and using multifaceted approaches. Through this competition, we are not only raising awareness of the impact of rhino poaching and its impact on community livelihoods and their security, we are promoting rhino conservation messages through young people in communities and schools. The idea is to empower and involve as many young people as possible to partake in the decisions being made towards encouraging rhino conservation. We are encouraging future leaders to become involved and be change agents in the fight against rhino poaching. "

The overall winner of the competition will receive a tablet and also be afforded a bursary to study at the Southern African Wildlife College for six months in 2016 to acquire a certificate: An introduction to Conservation and Environmental Education

Members of the media are invited to the event and can RSVP to [admin@rtfoundation.org.za](mailto:admin@rtfoundation.org.za) or call 0793409548.

Date: 23 September 2015 (Wednesday)

Time: 9am-2pm

Venue: Wits Rural Facility (Main Lodge) - Orpen Road

For further information about the Rhino Project and the 2015 Speech School Competition visit [www.ewt.org.za](http://www.ewt.org.za) or contact Kirsty Brebner on [kirstyb@ewt.org.za](mailto:kirstyb@ewt.org.za).

*End.*

**Contact:** Kirsty Brebner  
Rhino Project Manager

**Physical Address:** Building K2, Ardeer Road, Pinelands Office Park,  
Modderfontein 1609, Gauteng, South Africa

**Postal Address:** Private Bag X 11, Modderfontein 1645, Gauteng, South Africa

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Endangered Wildlife Trust  
Tel: +27 11 371 3600  
Cell: +27 82 784 8420  
[kirstyb@ewt.org.za](mailto:kirstyb@ewt.org.za)

and

Lillian Mlambo  
Communications Manager  
Endangered Wildlife Trust  
Tel: +27 11 372 3600  
[lillianm@ewt.org.za](mailto:lillianm@ewt.org.za)

**Physical Address:** Building K2, Ardeer Road, Pinelands Office Park,  
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