

[New Initiative for International Wilderness Expanded wilderness and wildlands in South Africa](#)
[The standard reference for wilderness managers and advocates](#)
[Making the newest and best case for wilderness protection](#)
[A push for REAL eco-tourism](#)
[The oldest tree in Africa, and perhaps?](#)
[Elephant expert honored](#)

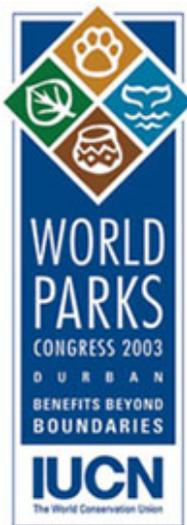


**Working for
Wilderness
Wildlife
and People**

The Latest WILD News -- The e-Leaf
Working for Wilderness, Wildlife and People

E-Leaf
June 2003

New Initiative for International Wilderness
WILD AND IUCN ESTABLISH THE WILDERNESS TASK FORCE



There is a new voice for wilderness at the World Conservation Union (IUCN). In response to a proposal from The WILD Foundation, IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas approved the formation of a Wilderness Task Force. Its initial mission is to generate wilderness-related outcomes at the World Parks Congress (WPC) in Durban, South Africa this September. The WPC takes place only every ten years - so it is critical that wilderness conservation is emphasized at this event. This year marks the first time that there will be a forum explicitly dedicated to wilderness issues at the WPC.

The Wilderness Task Force is co-chaired by Vance Martin, president of The WILD Foundation and Khulani Mkhize, CEO of KwaZulu Natal Wildlife. See <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/newsbulletins/new.html>.

[html](#).

The Wilderness Task Force is also charged with coordinating preparations for the upcoming 8th World Wilderness Congress. The Task Force will also be part of the WILD Planet Project (see below).

Expanded wilderness and wildlands in South Africa
BAVIAANSKLOOF MEGA-RESERVE PROJECT

Envision a place in Africa where



Your support and involvement is the fuel that makes everything possible and successful. Donations go right to the work!

mountains capped with snow descend into fertile valleys and pristine streams. The Baviaanskloof ("Baboon's Gorge") in South Africa is a place of wonderfully varied terrain and scenery, and incredibly rich in wildlife and plant diversity.



But just 189,000 ha (467,000 acres) of this spectacular place are currently protected in the Baviaanskloof Conservation Area (BCA) in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Its current size and shape limit its long-term ability to protect biodiversity, and private development plans may be in the works on nearby properties. The reserve must therefore be expanded and better managed, to safeguard undeveloped lands in the Baviaanskloof and provide to opportunities for tourism that bring income to local communities. This is the goal of the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve Project managed by The Wilderness Foundation, WILD's closest affiliate and partner organization based in the Eastern Cape.



A strong coalition has formed to push this project forward. The first step came last year at our [7th World Wilderness Congress](#) in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF) announced a US\$1 million grant to the project, with more to follow. The Eastern Cape

Provincial Government then committed US\$280,000 over three years in appreciation of benefits brought by the project to people of the Eastern Cape. Conservation International (CI) quickly matched this contribution with US\$300,000 from its Critical Ecosystems Protection Fund, to support planning and staff for two years.

Continuing its strong support for this project, CI recently added a generous Global Conservation Fund grant of US\$396,000 to The Wilderness Foundation for the Baviaanskloof. Funds will be used to purchase land and easements, with a goal to more than double the BCA to 500,000 ha (1.24 million acres) and achieve mega-reserve status for this area.

The Baviaanskloof supports 12 major vegetation types representing six of South Africa's seven biomes. Many of its plant species are found nowhere else on earth. Faunal diversity of the Baviaanskloof parallels its plant biodiversity. Some 310 bird species have

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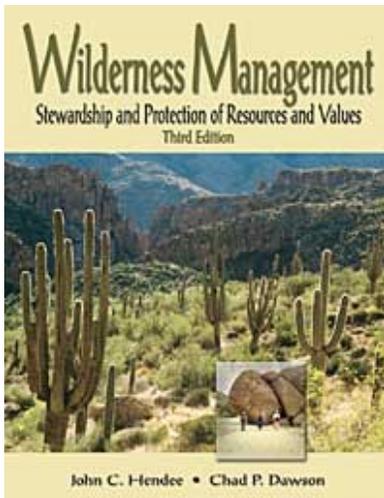
been recorded - representing more than a third of all terrestrial and marine species in South Africa. Reptile species number 56, with 23 endemic to South Africa, and three found only in the Baviaanskloof. The area is also home to 17 amphibian and 15 fish species. Because of its diversity and complexity, the Baviaanskloof has been nominated for the World Heritage List.

The Baviaanskloof was once the home to 46 medium- to large-sized mammal species. Over the last three centuries, 14 species became locally extinct - including the lion, elephant and the black rhinoceros. Expanding the reserve size will make wildlife reintroductions possible.

As the major water catchment, the Baviaanskloof is vital to greater Port Elizabeth -- the largest metropole in the Eastern Cape (and birthplace of Nelson Mandela). The water supply from the Baviaanskloof is so high in quality that no treatment is required before consumption. Water from the Baviaanskloof also irrigates agriculture in the fertile Gamtoos Valley - a major source of jobs in the area.

**The standard reference for wilderness managers and advocates
3RD EDITION OF WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT
RELEASED**

WILD has just released a new, completely revised and updated edition of Wilderness Management: Stewardship and Protection of Resources and Values. Published by Fulcrum books, Wilderness Management, 3rd edition, is edited by Dr. John Hendee and Dr. Chad Dawson. Dr. Hendee is both a WILD board member and WILD's Vice-President for Science and Education. Until his recent retirement he was director of the University of Idaho's Wilderness Research Center. Dr. Chad Dawson chairs the Forests and Natural Resources Management



Department at the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry. The book combines the expertise of more than 100 authorities on wilderness management and is considered the preeminent publication on wilderness management issues. Wilderness Management is available for purchase on our website (www.wild.org).

Making the newest and best case for wilderness protection THE WILD PLANET PROJECT



A great deal of new information has become available in the past few years to substantiate the need for wilderness protection. To build and expand on this momentum, WILD is launching an assessment and action initiative designed to develop a state of the art case for wilderness

protection, and to catalyze new field projects and protected areas. This initiative will consist of six thematic groups, with participants assembled from NGOs, government agencies, the private sector, and academia. Each will be tasked with clarifying the case for wilderness, and will also develop projects designed to apply their information and research. WILD Planet will be an integral part of planning and practical objectives for the 8th World Wilderness Congress - tentatively scheduled for 2005. Watch this space for an announcement for this exciting international forum, plus more details on WILD Planet.

A push for REAL eco-tourism THE WILD COLLECTION

How "eco" is your tourism destination? The WILD Collection is a pilot project designed to draw tourism to areas



outside overcrowded national parks, while also encouraging ecotourism enterprises to undertake conservation activities. This initiative was conceived by Michael Sweatman, chair of WILD's board of directors, and will initially involve 50-100 ecolodges across Africa. If successful, it will be applied to other markets outside of Africa. To be branded part of The WILD Collection, ecolodge enterprises must comply with several criteria, including environmental ethics, indigenous community involvement, and direct support for conservation. The project will catalyze relationships between outbound operators in the United States and Europe and inbound operators and ecolodges in Africa - and market the "conservation story" that accompanies each qualifying lodge. Lodges, camps or operators can seek more information by contacting m@sweatman.com.

The oldest tree in Africa, and perhaps the world?

WILD BOARD MEMBER UP A TREE



Carl Hilker is a man with a remarkable tree. Board members of both WILD and the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), WILD's affiliate in Namibia, Carl and his wife Cathryn own a wild "farm" that is part of the 40,000 ha (100,000 acre) wildlife sanctuary managed by CCF. It borders the stunning Waterberg Plateau National Park in central Namibia. On a high shelf on the edge of the dramatic Waterberg escarpment, Carl recently discovered an ancient *Combretum imberbe*, or common leadwood tree.

The tree's canopy reaches 25 meters (80 feet). Its five trunks measure nine meters (29 feet) in circumference.

Carl knew at once it was a singular tree. His findings were confirmed by a recent visit from Dr. Ernst van Jarsveld of the National Botanic Institute in Capetown. He collected seed from "Carl's tree," then germinated it at the NBI laboratory. He concluded, with a conservative estimate, that the tree must be 4,000 years old! Further studies will assess more conclusively the age, health, and possibly the provenance of this amazing tree. Adding to the mystique, no other leadwoods --except a very few, young trees sprouting up next to the ancient one -- grow within hundreds of kilometers of this site.

We'll report more as this remarkable tree tells its story.

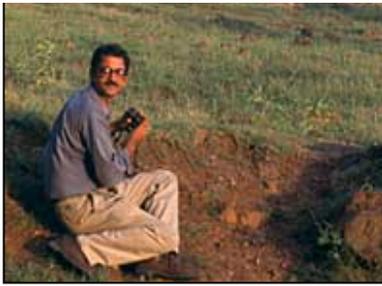
Elephant expert honored WILD ASSOCIATE AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS WHITELY GOLDEN AWARD

Noted Indian conservationist and elephant expert, Dr. Raman Sukumar has received the Whitley Golden award - one of the most prestigious bestowed on environmentalists. Dr. Sukumar is founder and director of the Bangalore-based Asian Elephant Research and Conservation Centre, and is a long-time WILD friend and



associate.

The award was presented by Princess Anne at the Royal Geographical Society in London, recognizing Dr. Sukumar's critical work saving endangered Asian Elephants. The award carries with it a prize of 50,000 pounds. Dr. Sukumar announced he plans to spend the award on conservation and research initiatives to reduce human-wildlife conflict.



Dr. Sukumar was a senior presenter at the 4th and 7th World Wilderness Congresses. He is currently on the board of directors of WILD's affiliate organization in India, The World Wilderness Trust. We offer our warmest congratulations for this well deserved recognition.

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