



NEWS RELEASE
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Tradition of African Story Telling Inspires New Children's Book
Wisdom Tales – Crane Stories from Southern Africa

A gifted team of individuals from KZN have combined their writing and artistry to create an exciting new book about South Africa's three threatened species of cranes. *Wisdom Tales – Crane Stories from Southern Africa* was launched today at Fordoun Hotel and Spa in Nottingham Road to benefit the work of the KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation (KZNCF).

Wisdom Tales fosters the proud tradition of African storytelling. Its lively stories, written for children and adults alike, reflect the embodied qualities of cranes highly valued by human cultures such as faithfulness and courage. The book also celebrates other creatures that share wetlands and grasslands with the cranes, including the cautious oribi, wise chameleon and watchful black-backed jackal.

Local authoress and educator, Jenny Stipcich and her sister, Viv Stacey, poet and spiritual teacher, combined efforts to write four of the tales. What wisdom can be learned from the Wattled Crane's scarred face? Why do cranes live longer than most birds? What spiritual attitudes can be learned from the crisis caused by the destruction of our priceless wetlands? Author Gamalihle Sibanda's delightful story illustrates the importance of patience and adaptation. Artist David Weildon Oosthuizen's illustrations add vibrancy and warmth to the spirit of the stories with his inspired attention to detail.

The book was made possible by a grant from N3 Toll Concession (N3TC). Andy Visser, N3TC's Marketing Manager said, "We are privileged to be a part of this wonderful project and thrilled that by the end of this year, five hundred copies of *Wisdom Tales* will be distributed to local schools and environmental organisations. This resource should enhance awareness of South African children to their natural heritage and equip them with an understanding of the importance of wetlands not only for all the wild creatures, but for the fresh water they provide to human communities."

In early September 2013, copies of *Wisdom Tales* will be available for R150 at Lazy Lizard Books in the Greendale Acres Centre in Howick and at Fordoun Hotel and Spa, Nottingham Road. All proceeds from the first edition will benefit the KZN Crane Foundation.

The KZNCF is a non-profit conservation organisation established in 1989 to combat the causes leading to the decline of South Africa's three crane species. The foundation is successfully fostering awareness of cranes and their dependence upon wetlands and grasslands through educational outreach and is currently preparing to rear and release Wattled Crane chicks back into the wild. The KZNCF owns and manages the Bill Barnes Crane and Oribi Nature Reserve (BBCONR) in Nottingham Road. To learn more, visit: www.kzncrane.co.za

N3 Toll Concession's mandate is to design, construct, finance, operate and maintain the N3 Toll Route between Cedara Interchange, near Hilton, in KZN and Heidelberg South in Gauteng. Its Corporate Social Investment Programme, *Touching Lives*, endeavours to make a meaningful difference to the lives of individuals and communities along the Route with sustainability being essential to the Programme's success. N3TC sponsors more than 70 community-based projects along the 415km section of the N3 Toll Route. Over and above N3TC's support of the KZNCF, it funds the Midlands Meander Association Education Project (MMAEP), Midlands Conservancy Forum, Music Literacy Africa, Mandela Capture Site, Singakwenza Early Childhood Development Programme, Midmar Mile and the N3 Gateway Tourism Association, to name a few projects in the KZN Midlands.

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