



Water Research Group
Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
North-West University, Potchefstroom

30/Sep/2018

Research Excellence Award granted to WRG PhD candidate

The National Research Foundation (NRF) was established as an independent government agency, through the National Research Foundation Act (Act No 23 of 1998). Among other projects, the NRF provides funding to postgraduate students in order to address the skills shortages in the fields of science, engineering and technology and humanities and social sciences.

The annual NRF Awards recognise and celebrate South African research excellence. This year, the ceremony took place on 26th September in Port Elizabeth. The awards presented to researchers are in two categories, the ratings linked awards and special recognition awards.

The 2018 NRF Awards Ceremony

8 individual researchers and
1 university/institution will be honoured with **Special Awards**, as well as **25** researchers who earned their **A-ratings** and **4** young researchers who earned their **P-ratings** during the latest NRF Rating cycle.

#NRFawards2018



NRF AWARDS 2018
ADVANCING SCIENCE FOR SOCIETAL BENEFIT

The special recognition awards provide a platform to honour researchers for career achievements and contributions to knowledge creation and dissemination, as well as capacity development and transformation. In this category, PhD candidate **Edward Charles Netherlands** was granted with the Research Excellence Award for Next Generation Researchers. This award recognises outstanding academic performance by final year doctoral students and effectively means that Ed is considered to be the best male PhD student in South Africa in any field of study!

LATEST NEWS

Ed is a sandwich PhD. student, under the supervision of Professor Nico Smit and Louis du Preez at NWU, South Africa and Professor Luc Brendonk and Dr. Maarten Vanhove at KU Leuven, Belgium. The aims of his PhD. project is to document amphibian blood parasite species diversity, provide a genetic and evolutionary perspective of these parasites, and provide a template for future ecological studies in terms of host, vector and parasite relationships.



Ed with his trophy and certificate

Current research projects include a national collaboration with the University of the Free State, researching the taxonomy and phylogeny of neglected and new apicomplexans of reptiles, and an intradepartmental collaboration with the African Amphibian Conservation Research Group, describing novel species of herpatofaunal apicomplexans respectively with the use of both morphological and molecular tools.

Ed also has co-authored a bilingual field guide on the frogs of Zululand, the first bilingual field guide in both English and Zulu!



A specimen from his study

Congratulations on your outstanding performance, Ed!