



Owl Awards event: 22 June 2021

Owl Awards

Nicolette Forbes

Since taking over as chairperson of BirdLife eThekwini KZN in early 2019, Nicolette has brought an unparalleled level of energy and innovation to the club. That she has accomplished so much under the trying circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic speaks even more to the level of her achievement.

Much of Nicolette's overall success can be attributed to her ability to draw in and inspire other club and committee members. Nonetheless, her individual successes are numerous and include organising activities for the club's 70th anniversary in 2019; revamping its website and Facebook page; establishing highly useful WhatsApp and e-mail communication channels; revitalising the outings portfolio; and taking charge of the calendar and ensuring sponsorship, top-quality production and healthy sales to make a handsome profit for the club. She has steered funds to some of BirdLife South Africa's most important projects by taking out Conservation League membership for the club and providing financial support for the Southern Banded Snake Eagle and Mouse-Free Marion initiatives. She organised and co-presented a 'Being a Better Birder' course many times and when Covid-19 lockdowns put a stop to face-to-face activities she took them online to great effect. A strategic planning meeting and AGMs (at Mt Edgecombe and then online) she took in her stride, she organised a photographic competition for members, and she initiated and led a new project to maximise SABAP2 coverage in the eThekwini area. But perhaps Nicolette's greatest achievement has been her meticulously planned effort to revive the club's membership. Almost single-handedly, she identified past members who had allowed their membership to lapse and urged them to rejoin. As a result, the number of club members jumped from 189 to 489 during 2019–2020 – a landmark success.