

Conservation Hero Shines Bright: Ritjeuavi Tjiningire

In the heart of Etanga Conservancy, an unsung hero is making waves with his unwavering dedication and remarkable achievements. Ritjeuavi Tjiningire is a true force to be reckoned with in the field of conservation. This young, energetic, and trustworthy field officer has captured the hearts of his colleagues and is leaving an indelible mark on the landscape.

Etanga Conservancy owes a great deal of its success to the diligent efforts of Tjiningire. Thanks to his timely reporting, the conservancy received High Wildlife Conflict (HWC) offsets a staggering three times last year. His commitment to his role as a field officer is unparalleled, leading his team of game guards with enthusiasm and coordinating fixed and foot patrols with a cheer. Through his exceptional leadership skills, poaching incidents have significantly decreased, allowing the conservancy's wildlife to thrive.

Despite the conservancy's limited resources, including the absence of a vehicle, Tjiningire encourages the game guards to undertake long-distance foot patrols. Their passion for the job and the pride they take in their work are evident, especially as they have only recently started receiving salaries through a COVID-19 grant. Their dedication is a testament to Tjiningire's influence and the positive working environment he fosters.

Beyond his fieldwork, Tjiningire goes above and beyond his role as a field officer. With no formal manager in place, he selflessly assists the management committee in the day-to-day operations of the conservancy. His dedication extends even further as he represents the conservancy at national forums, such as chairpersons' forums, ensuring its voice is heard on a broader scale.

Tjiningire's exceptional commitment and outstanding achievements were recently recognized at the prestigious 2023 Grassroots Owen-smith Community Ranger Awards (GOSCARS) awards. His contributions to the conservancy earned him an honorary mention, along with a well-deserved N\$2000.00 reward. This recognition serves as a testament to his remarkable efforts and further motivates him to continue exceeding expectations. His journey is a shining example of how one individual's passion and commitment can make a significant difference in protecting our precious natural resources.