

# Naturalists and Nomads

4 August 2010

To Whom it may Concern

## REFERENCE FOR MRS ANN TURNER

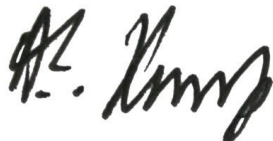
I have known Ann Turner since 1998 when I was still employed as Head Curator at the Department of Birds, Transvaal Museum (now Ditsong National Museum of Natural History) in Pretoria, South Africa. Ann was by then resident on Mabula Nature Reserve, and I was looking for a suitable location to release three juvenile Southern Ground Hornbills (SGH) that had been harvested as redundant second chicks from the Kruger National Park, part of a project with the Makuleke community that had reclaimed a section of the Park for sustainable conservation.

With little ornithological experience, Ann took on the challenge to rear these young hornbills for release into the wilds of Mabula and now, a little over a decade later, she has accomplished this to the point where they have bred and raised a chick in the wild. Along the way, Ann has established the Ground Hornbill Research and Conservation Project as a formal NGO, constructed a well-endowed research centre for the species at Mabula, developed rich and ongoing sources of funding, trained research and technical staff, and become leader of national and continental efforts to conserve this species. The results of her efforts include research on hornbill group structure and ecology, population genetics and population trends, that have led to techniques for wild capture of hornbills, marking and tracking methods, chick harvest and rearing, captive breeding, reintroduction and distribution mapping. All these efforts have also raised the IUCN Red Data status of the SGH nationally to Endangered and globally to Vulnerable.

While Ann did not achieve all of this alone, her will, charm, efficiency and determination made it happen. She has the ability to channel considerable physical and mental energy into tangible results, the humility to seek advice and assistance where necessary, the force of character to drive tasks to their conclusion, and the personnel skills to work with a variety of talents, organisations and ambitions. Her life experience enabled her to develop, run and manage a tight ship, one she has now handed over with great skill so that she can pursue other interests in her life.

SGHs in southern Africa have definitely benefited from her application, as have many African people, and conservation and research organisations. I am sure her special mix of enthusiasm, fearlessness and efficiency will prove useful to whatever challenge she takes on next.

Best wishes,



Dr Alan Kemp

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