

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED SENIOR
RESEARCH MEDAL**

Mr Chancellor, I have the honour of presenting to you
Martin Herrer Villet,
Professor of Entomology
in the Department of Zoology & Entomology,

for the award of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Senior Research Medal.

Professor Villet has been able to grow and sustain a scholarly reputation across a wide range of intellectually rigorous pursuits. He is an internationally recognised and highly valued expert in insect systematics, evolution and biology, and is universally acknowledged in his field as a scholarly expert in medical and forensic entomology. He is the foremost forensic entomologist in Africa. Here at Rhodes University, we also know him as being a very energetic and inspiring teacher and researcher, and a classical intellectual who values knowledge across the arts and sciences.

His peers on the selection committee for this award were particularly persuaded by the national and international impact of his scholarly activities over a sustained period. Professor Villet has been involved in entomological and related research for 29 years, during which time he has produced 119 publications in refereed journals, 11 book chapters, 123 conference presentations, and a range of technical reports, online resources, edited proceedings, and book reviews – a remarkable and sustained effort.

Reviewers use words like “outstanding quality” to describe his peer-reviewed papers, and they describe his work generally as of “excellent intellectual merit” and as “critically important for understanding the generation of biodiversity and the importance of climate and landscape changes”.

Professor Villet is cherished student mentor. He has graduated 9 PhD students and 14 MSc students during the course of his work at Rhodes, and is particularly known for fostering writing skills among his students and encouraging them to publish their research results.

In addition to his personal contributions to knowledge and those of his students, he has made significant contributions to the dissemination of entomological research more broadly through his editorial work for three journals: *African Entomology*, *Psyche*, and the *Open Forensic Journal*. His colleagues acknowledge his innovative approaches to this work, particularly in the case of *African Entomology*, in which he has been credited with putting systems in place to improve significantly the operation of the Journal.

His service to the academic community extends beyond formal publishing. He has organised several conferences, served on the boards of professional bodies and national initiatives, and played a prominent role in activities to promote the popular understanding of his discipline. His expertise is well known in the media through television and radio interviews, and through his writing for the popular media.

Mr Chancellor, I request you to award the **2011 Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Senior Research Medal** to **Professor Martin Herrer Villet**.