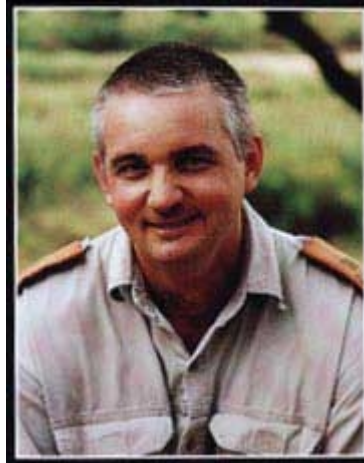


## **NILS KURE - Regional Manager**



**Nils Kure** started working at Mala Mala in 1988 straight after graduating from the University of Natal Pietermaritzburg with a double major in Zoology and a Higher Diploma in Education. His interests in Wildlife have been varied and he has a tendency to pursue whatever his current interest is with an enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism. Having become interested in birds in 1982, he was within a year awarded the prestigious A grade licence to trap, mark by means of a metal ring on the leg, and release birds for research purposes. A year later he was asked to referee the text for the 5th revision of Robert's Birds of Southern Africa, dealing specifically with the Waders and the Warblers.

This knowledge was put to good use when he joined Mala Mala as a ranger, birdwatching being by then an increasingly popular activity. By that time he had become interested in frogs, which led to his tracker, John Sithole, giving him his first Shangaan name - Machele - "Mr. Frog" - by which he is still known. Two years later, as senior ranger, Nils revised the ranger training program, significantly with respect to the reptiles and amphibians, of which he had by then compiled a comprehensive checklist. He also instituted an accurate and informative monthly game report, which became the basis of the cyber diary that is now followed by a large number of our guests.

He started to take photographs on account of the opportunities and in 1996, having accumulated a substantial number of pictures as well as unique data through the game report, left for a while during which time he worked on a book on leopards and returned to Mala Mala to work as a ranger when required. The result was the book "Living with Leopards" which was published in November 2003 to acclaim on account of the quality of its photographs as well as the text, being, at the time, the most comprehensive and up to date publication on leopard biology.

Nils thereafter spent two years managing Mala Mala, and a subsequent four being in charge of ranger training. He is currently back in management as Regional Manager. Having finished the leopard book, he is between interests but may be renewing an old fascination with freshwater crustaceans.

People who stay in the game reserve and guiding field for as long as he has often tend to move around, but he feels that there is no point in leaving a place that has been voted the top hotel in the world as well as in Africa and the Middle East on numerous occasions and that has debatably the best game viewing, probably the best predator viewing, and beyond question the best leopard viewing in Africa and therefore in the world, (though it must be pointed out that he has a deep-seated loathing for packing and for travel and avoids both insofar as is possible).