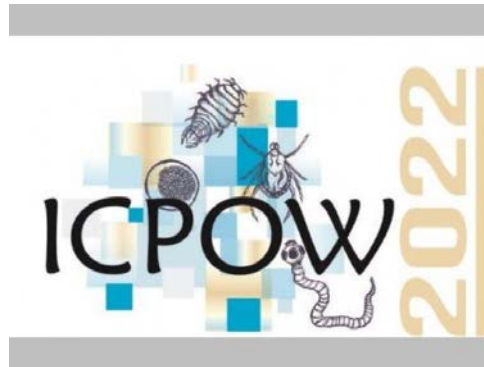


# Faculty DVTD staff attend 4th ICPOW and 50th annual PARSA conference

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The Parasitological Society of Southern Africa (PARSA) recently celebrated its golden jubilee in style as the 50<sup>th</sup> PARSA Conference was held together with the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Parasites of Wildlife from 11 to 15 September 2022. The postponement of the ICPOW due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 and again in 2021 made the synchronization of both conferences possible this year and enabled PARSA's 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee to be held in person (no-masks!) at a befitting venue, the famous Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga province, South Africa. The conference had a good response and was well attended by about 110 attendees from South Africa, the rest of Africa, Europe, Asia and America. COVID 19 again interfered as a keynote speaker from New Zealand could not travel due to restrictions currently in place for travel back in their country but thanks to technology, he was able to present virtually.

A welcome reception at the Skukuza Safari Lodge courtyard kicked off the conference proceedings where attendees were serenaded with traditional music by a local band and dancers. The scientific programme featured three keynote addresses by established international parasitologists from New Zealand (Robert Poulin), United Kingdom (Sandra Telfer) and Botswana (Maxwell Barson). Also showcased were 99 presentations, consisting of 81 oral and 18 poster presentations, which were delivered by postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and researchers on various themes in parasitology. A broad number of session themes was on offer which covered parasite diversity in freshwater and marine systems, human parasites and pathogens, parasites and pathogens of small mammals, avians and wildlife, helminths associated with domestic animals and wildlife, and parasite and pathogen detection and control.



*DVTD students, staff and alumni who attended the 50<sup>th</sup> PARSA and 4<sup>th</sup> ICPOW Conference*

Students from the Faculty of Veterinary Science's Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases (DVTD), University of Pretoria, Tshenolo Mbaba, Faith Nkosi, Zinathi Lukanji, Aneliza Smit, Dina Fagir and Refilwe Bokaba gave oral presentations while Marcus Makgabo had a poster presentation. Staff from DVTD who also delivered oral presentations were Dr Chris Marufu and Prof Bernie Penzhorn. The latter delivered an excellent and very informative presentation on the history of PARSA over the past 50 years. The conference dinner (preceded by an exciting sundowner conference game drive) capped what was a very successful conference.

Four Faculty DVTD members were elected to the new PARSA Council namely Ms Faith Nkosi (Student representative), Prof Kgomotso-Sibeko Matjila (Secretary), Dr Raksha Bhoora (Treasurer) and Prof Marinda Oosthuizen, also the Faculty's Deputy Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies (Additional co-opted member). DVTD members, Dr Dinar Fagir, Prof Kgomotso Sibeko-Matjila, Prof Tshepo Matjila (HOD: DVTD) and Dr Chris Marufu were session chairs, while Dr Chris Marufu was in the scientific committee that reviewed the abstracts for the conference. The golden jubilee conference saw the celebration of PARSA as it moves from strength to strength as a platform for sharing scientific information for parasitologists. Be on the lookout for the first call of the 51<sup>st</sup> PARSA conference which will be hosted by the DVTD in 2023!

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