

Local snake wrangler joins National Geographic Wild Show

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Mbali Mtshali joins *Snakes in the City* to co-host new season together with Simon Keys and Siouxsie Gillett. "Snakes are more afraid of us than we could ever be of them," says local snake handler.



National Geographic Wild's *Snakes in the City* has long been a viewer favourite as herpetologists Simon Keys and Siouxsie Gillett respond to call-outs to catch and release snakes from homes and buildings in and around Durban. When the eighth season premieres across Africa on Wednesday 6 July at 6pm (CAT), the two will be joined by local snake wrangler Mbali Mtshali.

Born in Limpopo, Mtshali moved to KwaZulu-Natal at a young age and had her first exposure to working with reptiles while volunteering at a non-profit organisation. She later cut her teeth handling snakes while assisting at a reptile park. She has since learnt to handle venomous snakes. This dynamic lady also conducts tours at the facility, is full of energy and is a dedicated body builder.

In *Snakes in the City*, our streetwise snake catchers race across 'Snake City' (Durban) to face some of the world's deadliest snakes in the most bizarre situations and release them back into the wild. When Mtshali joins the team, her skills are immediately put to the test when they go up against a lethal black mamba inside a school, a puff adder in a toilet and an enormous python on a goat farm, not to mention a super-fast monitor lizard in a ceiling, a spitting cobra inside a local shop and many more.



“For many years, in my culture, these reptiles have been misinterpreted as a sign of witchcraft, a bad omen and an image of the evil serpent. Working on *Snakes in the City* shows that residents of Durban can catch snakes too – with the right training,” said Mtshali. “My biggest message for viewers and my community is that snakes are not these evil monsters that they have been made out to be – snakes are more afraid of us than we could ever be of them,” she adds.

“National Geographic’s mission is to ignite the explorer in all of us, and our on-screen experts have a huge role to play in achieving this mission, as they share the wonders of our natural world for with viewers,” says Christine Service, senior vice president and general manager of The Walt Disney Company Africa. “We are excited to welcome Mbali Mtshali to our screens, bringing her infectious energy and passion that, together with Simon and Siouxsie, will go a long way in helping change negative perceptions of these fascinating creatures for National Geographic Wild audiences across the continent.”

Snakes in the City is produced by Earth Touch for National Geographic.

How to tune in:

DSTV: Channel 182

StarSat: 221 on DTH, 210 on DTT (250 on DTT in Uganda)

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