



Media release

From the Minister for Environment

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VICTORIAN BEACHES THE FIRST FOR MANY NEW MIGRANTS

A network of volunteers which provides Victoria's newest citizens with their first Australian, and in some cases, first ever, beach experience last night received a 2005 Victorian Coastal Award for Excellence from the Minister for Environment, John Thwaites.

The Western Young People's Independent Network provides migrants and refugees with educational trips to the coast and encourages people to enjoy the beach.

Mr Thwaites presented 13 coastal awards for work ranging from protection of one of the most endangered species in the world, the Orange-bellied Parrot, to a Healthy Waterways program run by the City of Greater Geelong.

"These awards acknowledge the time and effort that many groups and individuals devote to ensuring that our coast is looked after properly," Mr Thwaites said.

"They encourage a message of sustainability and reinforce that Victoria's beautiful coastline is a great asset but also a limited resource.

"Victoria's coast is managed by a wide range of people and groups representing an equally wide range of interests from Government and non-government agencies, committees of management and local government through to businesses and volunteers.

"The Government and other coastal managers are dedicated to the Victorian Coastal Strategy and to ensuring that use and development that does occur in coastal areas is appropriate and sustainable."

Diane James, Chairman of the Victorian Coastal Council, particularly acknowledged the efforts of the thousands of volunteers who give up their time to help look after the coast.

"By taking things like the health of the environment into local hands, communities develop a real sense of ownership and pride in their surrounds.

"The award finalists have made outstanding contributions to Victoria's unique and diverse marine and coastal environments" Ms James said.

The Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence were established by the Victorian Coastal Council in conjunction with the Coast Action / Coastcare program. This is the sixth year of awards.

Over 160 people attended the awards presentation, with representatives from voluntary groups, ports authorities, tourism, local government, community, environment, conservation bodies and government agencies.

Award winners follow:

Media contact: Geoff Fraser 9651 5799, 0407 360 256 www.vic.gov.au

AWARD RECIPIENTS VICTORIAN COASTAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE 2005

Person/Organisation Nominated	Project Description
Kerstin Thompson Architects P/L	House and landscape at Connewarre. From a potato farm on the shores of a wetland to a residential home and property, the Connewarre house provides a refreshing model for reducing the ecological and visual impact of coastal housing.
DPI Queenscliff Centre in Association with Lyons Architects	Victorian Government Centre for Marine and Freshwater Systems Research.
Hobsons Bay City Council	Truganina Coastal Parklands Project.
Seastar 2004 Team (Inverloch Residents & Ratepayers Assoc.)	Seastar 2004 team for their response to a marine pest, the Northern Pacific Seastar, outbreak at Inverloch.
Western Young People's Independent Network	Development of Government/agency/ community partnerships into strong networks that enabled culturally diverse young Victorians to learn from and share knowledge about coastal and marine resource management.
Friends of the Bluff	An interactive educational guide to Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary through a multi media CD ROM and web site dubbed "Living on the Edge".
Reef Watch	Reef Watch is a community program that encourages and assists divers and snorkels to monitor marine life at their favourite sites and contribute their observations to building knowledge of Victoria's unique marine environment.
Associate Professor John Sherwood	Associate Professor Sherwood has made a long standing, significant contribution to the conservation of estuarine and marine communities through his paid and voluntary work with scientific, professional and lay communities.
WTFN	Coxy's Big Break – A Marine National Parks special on Channel 7 which provided over 400,00 viewers with an understanding of Victoria's unique and diverse marine environments
The Age	Battle for the Beaches A series of news articles, features and editorial that highlighted the mounting pressure on the Victorian coast from permanent and temporary population growth and from urban sprawl.
Warren Chapman	Warren Chapman from Barwon Coast Committee of Management has made an outstanding contribution the protection of the Victorian coast for over 20 years
South West Working Group - Orange-bellied Parrot Recovery Team	Orange-Bellied Parrot community survey, education and awareness raising on the south-west coastline.
Greater Geelong City Council	Geelong Healthy Waterways Program.

For interview opportunities with award recipients or more detail, contact Alex Fisher: 9637 8911

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