



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for Environment

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SEA STARS COME OUT FOR 2007 COASTAL AWARDS

Marine, coastal and heritage conservation groups, an abalone diving association, the Queenscliff Marine Discovery Centre and an architecture firm were just some of the winning entries at last night's 2007 Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence held in St Kilda.

Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, John Thwaites joined the Chairman of the Victorian Coastal Council, Diane James, to salute 35 finalists and present awards to twelve winners.

"Thousands of volunteers from more than 350 coastal community groups contribute to the protection, conservation and management of our coastline," Mr Thwaites said.

"Tonight we are honouring these people – many of whom have dedicated most of their lives to the protection and preservation of our coastal and marine environments."

Mr Thwaites presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to John Ariens, who has made a huge contribution to marine and heritage conservation across Victoria.

Mr Ariens has dedicated his life to educating people about the incredible treasures that lie beneath the surface. He has spent thousands of hours in the water surveying wrecks, counting fish, identifying marine invertebrates and working diligently to protect Victoria's precious marine and coastal natural assets.

Mr Ariens has also made a significant contribution on land; conducting numerous seminars and presentations on marine life to schools groups, community associations, and overseas guests, and assisting in the development of management plans for East Gippsland's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuary.

Ms James said Mr Ariens, along with all of the nominees and winners, were truly inspiring in their dedication.

"This year we have had such a breadth of nominations, which demonstrates the great love felt by all Victorians for our marine and coastal environments," Ms James said.

"We hope that other Victorians will be inspired by the achievements of these finalists, and will want to become more involved in protecting our coastal and marine environments".

The Awards are a joint initiative of the Victorian Coastal Council and the Coast Action/Coastcare program and are now in their eighth year. The ceremony recognised and acknowledged the achievements of those who have played a significant role in protecting and enhancing the values of Victoria's coast – be they natural, cultural, historical, visual or built.

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Winners of the Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence 2007

CATEGORY	NAME / PROJECT	ORGANISATION / DESCRIPTION	SUBURB
Lifetime Achievement	John Ariens	Bairnsdale Scuba / John Ariens has made a huge contribution to Marine and Heritage conservation across the state.	PAYNESVILLE
Outstanding Individual Achievement	Harry Braidahl	Nautilus Education/MESA / Harry has worked over 20 years in marine and coastal education as a teacher in secondary schools, author and researcher. He was a founding member of the Marine Education Society of Australia	FRANKSTON
Innovation	Len McCall (President)/ Western Abalone Divers Association	Western Abalone Divers Association / The Association has moved to managing its zones by treating each of its 36 reefs as a separate entity in order to conserve abalone stocks and prevent over fishing	PORT FAIRY
Education	Alex Giunnuzzi / Marine Discovery Centre Volunteer Training Program	Marine Discovery Centre / The MDC volunteer program promotes community stewardship by training volunteers to be engaged and well informed about our unique coastal environments. They share their knowledge and encourage marine stewardship with over 5000 individuals each year	QUEENSCLIFF
Species Protection	Grainne Maguire, Birds Australia/ Promoting Coexistence between recreationists and beach nesting birds.	Birds Australia/ This project aims to increase awareness and involvement by communities and to improve and inform decision making for the conservation management of Australia's beach-nesting shorebirds	HAWTHORN EAST
Cultural Achievement	Ricky Mullett, Gippsland & East Gippsland East Aboriginal Co-operative, & Anthony Costigan, Coasts and Crown Land Management, DSE / Aboriginal Burial Site Erosion Control Project, Gippsland Lakes	Gippsland & East Gippsland East Aboriginal Co-operative and Coasts and Crown Land Management, DSE/ An aboriginal burial site has been protected from coastal erosion through the collaborative efforts and extensive work by key regional stakeholders	BAIRNSDALE
Coastal Conservation and Protection by a Community Group	Donna Smithyman / Friends of Mud Islands	Friends of Mud Islands / A non-profit volunteer group which assists in the care, maintenance and preservation of Mud Islands	EAST GEELONG
Coastal Conservation and Management by a Appointed Manager	Anthony Nelson / East Gippsland Shire Council	In 1999 the EGS was formally appointed as CoM over those areas of foreshore reserve designated as sites for public purposes within or adjacent to townships or locations of high visitor use	BAIRNSDALE
Building & Design	Ian Perkins, Perkins Architects/ Apollo Bay Eco Hostel	Perkins Architects / A 72 bed youth hostel incorporating meeting rooms, car parking and landscaping. It is an environmentally sustainable design.	PRAHRAN
Water Quality	Terri Allen, Friends of Wonthaggi Heathlands and Coastal Reserve Inc/ Wetlands Watch Them Grow.	Friends of Wonthaggi Heathlands and Coastal Reserve Inc / Have created a wetland on degraded land and planted 7000 trees and 12000 wetland plants and produced signage, leaflets and bird boxes	WONTHAGGI
Media	Travis Lee/"Out of the Blue" radio program.	"Out of the Blue"/ Weekly radio program covering marine and coastal issues both local and international	POINT LONSDALE