



WET TROPICS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Awards honour Wet Tropics protectors

The annual Wet Tropics 'Cassowary Awards' recognised the many personalities that help in conservation of the World Heritage Area at a ceremony at the Rainforest Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary on Saturday 29 November.

Rainforest researchers, conservationists and Rainforest Aboriginal people were presented with awards by the Queensland Minister for Environment the Honourable Dean Wells and representative for the Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Heritage, the Honourable Warren Entsch.

Mr Wells said a Cassowary Award is a prestigious accolade in the Wet Tropics community.

"The awards recognise people who devote their lives to the preservation of Australia's Tropical Rainforests through either community effort, education, conservation or research.

"It is recognition at the highest degree – by your peers, previous recipients, government agencies and the community," he said.

Wet Tropics Board Chair, John Grey, said he was impressed with the calibre of nominations which made selecting recipients extremely difficult.

"The Cassowary Awards are in their fifth year now. Each year we award recipients that are icons in community conservation and there doesn't seem to be a shortage of worthy nominees. It's a good sign for the future of the World Heritage Area.

"Through these awards we recognise achievements at a grass-roots level, whether it be revegetating your dairy farm, researching endangered species or passing on Aboriginal cultural heritage to the community," he said.

Mr Entsch said the awards were a good way to recognise the community's quiet achievers.

"The people that receive these awards donate so much of their time and resources. They don't ask for recognition; they just get things done," Mr Entsch said.

"I think the Cassowary Awards are a great way to show these special advocates for World Heritage preservation that we acknowledge them, and appreciate their efforts."

The awards ceremony sponsored by Tourism Queensland, the Rainforest Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary and the Australian Rainforest Foundation.

Award recipients for 2003 are:

Category: Science

Recipient: Dr Joan Ben Trupperbaumer

For her significant contribution to our understanding of the World Heritage Area through ground-breaking research.

Category: not applicable

Recipient: Mr Rupert Russell

For his contribution as a naturalist, conservationist and park ranger to the protection of the World Heritage Area.

Category: Arts

Recipient: Ms Ruth Berry

For presenting World Heritage values to the international community through film and illustration.

Category: Conservation

Recipient: Ms Ruth Lipscombe

For her passionate involvement with community conservation and personal commitment to reconciliation with Traditional Owners.

Category: Rainforest Aboriginal culture

Recipient: Mr Charles Morganson

For his outstanding contribution to the continuation of Rainforest Aboriginal culture in the World Heritage Area.

Category: Unsung Hero

Recipient: Mr George Skeene

For his commitment to preserving Yirrgandji culture and sharing his knowledge with the wider community.

Category: Nature Based Tourism

Recipient: Mr Russell Boswell

For his tireless commitment to encouraging sustainable tourism in the World Heritage Area.

Category: Neighbour

Recipient: Ms Janeene Wallwork

For conservation initiatives on her property and leading by example as a World Heritage neighbour.



2003 Cassowary Award Winners:

L-R Back: Rupert Russell, Ruth Lipscombe, Janeene Wallwork, Dr Joan Ben Trupperbaumer, WTMA Board Chair John Grey, Ruth Berry.

L-R Front: Russell Boswell, George Skeene, Charlie Morganson.

