



MEDIA RELEASE

## Crocodile Islands group snaps up Indigenous National Landcare Award

**23 September:** The Crocodile Islands Rangers were victorious at the 2016 National Landcare Awards, which took place last night at the Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre. The group took home the Indigenous Land Corporation Indigenous Landcare award ahead of seven other finalists from across the country

The Rangers manage close to 40,000 hectares of land, 200 kilometres of coastline, and 6,000 square kilometres of sea country off the north east coast of Arnhem Land. Ten full-time rangers work closely with the Traditional Owners, elders, junior rangers and the community in a wide variety of land and sea management activities.

Gerard Morgan accepted the award and was excited about the group's achievement. "It's amazing. Its teaching us how anyone can do it. We're a small community, we only have 1,000 people on the island. We build canoes, walk in bare feet, we've been doing this for a long time," he said. "We don't own the land; the land owns us. Looking after the land is good for not only us, but generations and generations. We want kids to learn and look after the land like we did."

Landcare Australia CEO, Tessa Jakszewicz, commended the National Landcare Award winners on their outstanding achievements.

"It's an honour to be able to present these awards to champions within the Landcare community," Tessa says. "This biennial event allows us time to get together and celebrate all that we have achieved, and enables us to learn from each other's successes and failures. The hard work of Landcarers all across Australia deserves recognition and praise."

Winners across nine diverse categories from sustainable farm practices, to Junior Landcare, and Coastcare, were announced at the National Landcare Awards last night, which was hosted by ABC Gardening Australia's Costa Georgiadis and attended by Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Luke Hartsuyker MP, who presented the prestigious Bob Hawke Landcare Award.

The Awards are a key part of the National Landcare Conference, which finishes today, 23 September, and hosted over 600 Landcarers from across the country in Melbourne as Victoria celebrated 30 years of Landcare.

All finalist case studies and photos by category are available at [nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards](http://nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards). The list of all the winners of the 2016 National Landcare Awards and highlights are on the next page.

*The National Landcare Awards are being delivered by Landcare Australia in partnership with the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the Victorian Government, and are sponsored by Fairfax Media, Indigenous Land Corporation, and ManpowerGroup Australia.*

### **2016 National Landcare Award Winner NT:**

#### **Indigenous Land Management Award - Crocodile Islands Rangers (Arnhem Land, NT)**

The Crocodile Islands Rangers manage the land and sea country of the Crocodile Islands, off the north east coast of

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Arnhem Land. The Rangers manage approximately 40,000 hectares of land, 200 kilometres of coastline, and 6,000 square kilometres of sea country within Castlereagh Bay. The site is recognised as being of international conservation significance due to the large aggregations of migratory shorebirds, large seabird colonies, and important marine turtle nesting beaches. This ranger group was set up by the Traditional Owners, and is governed by a Traditional Owner Executive Committee. The 10 full-time rangers work closely with the Traditional Owners, elders, junior rangers and the community in a wide variety of land and sea management activities. The rangers are based on Milingimbi Island and also undertake NRM work on Rapuma, Murrungga and Gurriba Islands, as well as some of the nearby mainland areas. The Ranger program has created 10 full time jobs for Indigenous people in the community, as well as provided other casual work opportunities.

Winners in diverse categories from sustainable farm practices, to Coastcare, young Landcare leader, and Indigenous land management, were announced at the National Landcare Awards on 22 September in Melbourne. The winner of the People's Choice Award and the prestigious Bob Hawke Landcare Award were also announced.

The Awards are a key part of the National Landcare Conference, which took place from 21-23 September. All finalist case studies and photos by category are available at [nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards](http://nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards).

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**About Landcare Australia**

Landcare Australia is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision of all Australians actively caring for the land and water that sustain us. For over 25 years, Landcare Australia has worked collaboratively with federal, state and local governments, corporate partners and sponsors, and individuals, to build capacity for the Landcare community to better manage Australia's crucial land and water assets.

Landcare Australia delivers hundreds of projects annually through the volunteer efforts of local community groups, indigenous groups, and the more than 5,400 Landcare and Coastcare groups that make up the Landcare movement.

[www.landcareaustralia.org.au](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au)

**Australian Government  
Individual Landcarer Award**

**Rhonda Williams, WA**

**Rhonda Williams** sees Landcare and sustainable agriculture as being key to long term profitability and has hosted 20 field days and 30 trials on her farms.

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<p><b>Australian Government Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award</b></p>	<p><b>Southampton Homestead</b> WA</p>	<p><b>Jeff Pow and Michelle McManus</b> are part of a leading trend in farming, taking responsibility for the growing and the processing of all food on their farm Southampton Homestead, selling their produce directly to the community.</p>
<p><b>Australian Government Landcare Facilitator or Coordinator Award</b></p>	<p><b>Jill Richardson, WA</b></p>	<p><b>Jill Richardson</b> has spent 25 years dedicated to furthering Landcare in WA, leading significant on-ground environmental works and behavioural change in sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation.</p>
<p><b>Australian Government Partnerships with Landcare Award</b></p>	<p><b>Lake Macquarie Landcare</b> NSW</p>	<p><b>Lake Macquarie Landcare</b> is a community-based organisation built on the successful working partnership between passionate, dedicated and hardworking local volunteers and the Lake Macquarie City Council. It is the largest network of Landcare groups in NSW. Since 2001, Coolum District Coast Care Inc has consistently worked hard to galvanise energy and public interest in caring for the coastal environment on the Maroochy north shore of the Sunshine Coast and beyond.</p>
<p><b>Coastcare Award</b></p>	<p><b>Coolum and District Coastcare, QLD</b></p>	<p><b>The Blackwood Basin Group</b> has been coordinating community-managed Landcare projects across the Blackwood Catchment for over two decades; working with 54 catchment groups, assisting over 500 farming families and delivering more than \$16million of Landcare activities throughout the iconic river basin.</p>
<p><b>Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award</b></p>	<p><b>Blackwood Basin Group</b> WA</p>	<p><b>The Rangers</b> have received a wide range of land and sea management training, and they combine these new skills and knowledge with their traditional Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, to manage and protect their unique area.</p>
<p><b>Indigenous Land Management Award</b></p>	<p><b>Crocodile Islands Rangers</b> NT</p>	<p><b>The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre</b> – Creative Catchment Kids program has grown over the past five years to include 60 Murray and Riverina schools. Its mission is to engage the region’s students and schools to develop more resilient landscapes and communities through a change in attitude toward natural resource management.</p>
<p><b>Junior Landcare Team Award</b></p>	<p><b>Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre, NSW</b></p>	<p><b>Naomi Edwards</b> is an instigator of progressive change when it comes to addressing environmental issues and is passionate about intergenerational engagement in Landcare.</p>
<p><b>Manpower Young Landcare Leader Award</b></p>	<p>(tie) <b>Naomi Edwards, QLD</b> and <b>Ella Maesepp, WA</b></p>	<p><b>Ella Maesepp</b> has worked as a Landcare Officer in the Upper Blackwood area for 12 years, delivering millions of dollars’ worth of projects to protect biodiversity, manage salinity, increase agricultural sustainability and reduce individual carbon footprints.</p>
<p><b>People’s Choice Award</b></p>	<p><b>Southampton Homestead</b> WA</p>	<p><b>Jeff Pow and Michelle McManus</b> are part of a leading trend in farming, taking responsibility for the growing and the processing of all food on their farm Southampton Homestead, selling their produce directly to the community.</p>
<p><b>Bob Hawke Landcare Award</b></p>	<p><b>Stephen Burgess, QLD</b></p>	<p><b>Stephen Burgess</b> has run Wurraglen Nature Refuge in Dagon, Queensland for nearly 20 years, developing the property which combines sustainable market farming and light grazing. Stephen’s blend of biological and organic farming principles combined with holistic management practices demonstrate every aspect of the Landcare ethic.</p>

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