

THE *AG* EUREKA PRIZES

Incorporating the Michael Daley Awards

1999 AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM EUREKA PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The winners of the 1999 *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes* were announced on 4 May at a ceremony hosted by Adam Spencer at the Australian Museum.

Finalists flew in from around the globe to be present at what has become Australia's pre-eminent national science and environment awards. A record 11 Prizes, worth \$100,000, were awarded on the night to individuals and organisations from NSW, ACT, Qld, SA and WA, for outstanding achievements in Australian scientific and environmental research, and for the communication of science and technology to the wider community.

Australian Museum Director, Professor Mike Archer (himself a recipient of the 1990 *Inaugural Eureka Prize for the Promotion of Science*) commented:

"The Australian Museum is extremely proud to be the administrator of these prestigious national science and environment awards. The growing reputation and success of the *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes* was clearly demonstrated by the overall level of excellence in the entries."

He continued, "This year's entries covered a vast array of exciting issues including ground-breaking research on the genesis of colour in animals, through to the communication to the public of very topical issues including the impact of humans on the Great Barrier Reef, coral bleaching and global warming. It was extremely difficult to select the winners in each category."

1999 marks the *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes* most successful year, with a prize pool totalling \$100,000. On hand to present the Prizes were Senator The Hon. Robert Hill, Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, The Hon. Bob Debus M.P., NSW Minister for the Environment, and Dr Brian Gaensler, 1999 Young Australian of the Year.

The *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes* were launched in 1990 to reward outstanding achievements in Australian science and environment, and are administered by the Australian Museum. Since their inception, the *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes* have been highly successful in raising public awareness of the vitality, originality and high international standard of Australian science and environmental research.

THE 1999 AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM EUREKA PRIZE WINNERS

THE POL EUREKA PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH - \$10,000

Dr David Lindenmayer, Associate Professor at the ANU Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies and Department of Geography, Canberra, and Professor Hugh Possingham, Chair of Environmental Science, Department of Applied Science and Molecular Ecology, The University of Adelaide

For their outstanding and ground-breaking collaborative work on *Population modelling for the conservation of Australia's forest fauna*, as characterised in the development of a conservation plan for Leadbeater's possum - one of Australia's most controversial forest species. This was the first Population Viability Analysis to use a decision theory framework to choose between management options. Their work is outstanding both scientifically and through its impact on real world resource use. (SA & ACT)

THE ALLEN STROM EUREKA PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS - \$10,000

***Airwatch*, developed by Ms Jennie Anderton, Western Australian Department of Environmental Protection**

For the development of *Airwatch*, a schools-based, air quality monitoring program designed to allow high school students to develop, through participative learning theory, an understanding of local and global air quality issues to enable them to make positive behavioural choices contributing to the environmental outcome of cleaner air. (WA)

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES EUREKA PRIZE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH - \$10,000

Dr Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, Associate Professor, School of Biological Sciences, University of Sydney

For research into the physiological basis of coral bleaching, which has contributed significantly to the understanding of coral bleaching by showing that this is caused by the effects of small increases in ocean temperature on the algal symbionts of reef-building corals. His recent work has identified the precise steps in the biochemistry of the symbiotic algae at which dysfunction occurs. (NSW)

THE AUSTRALIAN SKEPTICS EUREKA PRIZE FOR CRITICAL THINKING - \$10,000

Dr Melissa Finucane, University of Western Australia & Decision Research, Oregon USA

For *Public perceptions of risk*, research into public perceptions of the risks of environmental and health hazards, and why these perceptions - in particular of a negative relationship between a hazard's risks and benefits - differ from conclusions made by

scientists. (WA)

THE GRAPHIC WORLD EUREKA SCIENCE BOOK PRIZE - \$10,000

Jennifer Cooke, *Cannibals, Cows and the CJD Catastrophe*, Random House Australia

For a comprehensive and superbly researched book about a creeping epidemic that has claimed the lives of thousands around the world. It is a disease that comes in many guises - known as Kuru among the Highlanders of Papua New Guinea, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in western hospitals, and Mad Cow disease in newspaper headlines. (NSW)

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY EUREKA SCHOOLS PRIZE FOR BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES - \$11,000

Year 11 and 12 students, Newton Moore Senior High School, Bunbury, WA

For research and development of the 'Rehabilitation of School Wetlands' website which reports on the students' research and actions to rehabilitate wetlands on their school boundary. This includes their liaison with local community groups, effective lobbying for resources, and development of a wetland rehabilitation action plan which was incorporated into their biology curriculum. (WA)

THE ENVIRONMENT AUSTRALIA PETER HUNT EUREKA PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM - \$10,000

Mr Michael Troy, ABC TV News

For the development, as Environment Reporter for ABC TV News, of a collection of television news and current affairs reports dealing specifically with environmental issues, including rising salinity, the forestry debate, coral bleaching, the Jabiluka uranium mine, Landcare projects, global warming and biodiversity. (NSW)

THE MICHAEL DALEY EUREKA PRIZE FOR PROMOTION OF SCIENCE - \$7,000

Mr Vince Ford, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Mount Stromlo Observatory

Awarded for his outstanding contribution to the promotion of the science of astronomy in Australia for over 34 years, and his tireless dedication and commitment, outstanding science communication skills and the generosity with which he has made his contribution. (ACT)

THE MICHAEL DALEY EUREKA PRIZE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING RADIO JOURNALISM - \$7,000

Mr Ian Townsend, DNA Detectives, ABC Regional Radio, 17 July 1998

For a program which seeks to explain the impact of new "DNA fingerprinting" technology, and its role in reopening and solving long standing criminal cases. (Mackay, Qld)

**THE MICHAEL DALEY EUREKA PRIZE FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING TELEVISION JOURNALISM -
\$7,000**

Mr Richard Smith, Rumble in the Jungle, broadcast on ABC TV, 5 May 1998.

For a documentary following a field trip by a group of Brazilian scientists into the Amazon jungle in search of a long lost meteor impact crater. (NSW)

**THE MICHAEL DALEY EUREKA PRIZE FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING PRINT JOURNALISM - \$7,000**

Ms Emma Connors, *They're Young. They've got IT*, published in *The Australian Financial Review Magazine*, May 1998.

For an article which looks at the generation of young IT workers who have grown up with computers, and consequently have different working perspectives than previous generations. (NSW)

THE FINALISTS

PAST WINNERS

- [Winners of the 1997 Eureka prizes](#)
- [Winners of the 1996 Eureka prizes](#)



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