



## The Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards

### Media Release

14 November 2024

### Celebrating Excellence in Marine and Coastal Care and Management

Congratulations to the winners and finalists showcased at the 2024 Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards held on Thursday 7 November 2024, hosted by the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council.

The Awards recognised the outstanding efforts and achievements of coastal leaders and communities across Victoria and were an opportunity to celebrate the many people, partnerships and organisations protecting and managing the coastal and marine environment now, and for future generations.

Over 150 guests from the marine and coastal sector, including community members, Traditional Owners, universities, Coastcare groups, Committees of Management, not-for-profit organisations, local councils, state government departments and agencies, as well as private landowners and private companies came together on Wurundjeri Country, at the Showtime Events Centre in South Wharf, Naarm/Melbourne to celebrate our treasured coast.

Guests were welcomed to Country by Wurundjeri Elder Bill Nicholson, with Sheena Watt MP, Member for Northern Metropolitan, presenting the trophies to this year's winners on behalf of the Hon. Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Environment.

This year's Awards attracted 43 diverse and impressive nominations across six categories. The Victorian Marine and Coastal Council was thrilled to see so many deserving candidates receive formal recognition for their incredible dedication and expertise.

The Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards have been running for over 25 years (previously under the Victorian Coastal Council; now under the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council) and are a highlight for the marine and coastal sector in Victoria.

The evening also provided a chance for the coastal and marine community to acknowledge the contributions of current and former members of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council and to look ahead to the opportunities presented by implementation of the Marine and Coastal Act 2018, the Marine and Coastal Policy 2020 and the Marine and Coastal Strategy 2022.

The Victorian Marine and Coastal Council congratulates the 2024 finalists and winners, and thanks the many unsung heroes, volunteers and caretakers along the entire Victorian coastline, whose passion and dedication are greatly appreciated and often undervalued.

The winners are as follows:

**Leadership in Climate Adaptation and Resilience**

South Gippsland Shire Council for 'The South Gippsland Coastal Strategy'

**Excellence in marine and coastal design or development**

City of Greater Geelong for 'The Dell Eco Reef, Clifton Springs'

**Distinction in biodiversity and ecosystem conservation**

The Nature Conservancy Australia for 'Reef Builder'

**Inspiring community engagement and education (professional agencies, large organisations and industry)**

Dolphin Research Institute for '*i sea, i care*'

**Inspiring community engagement and education (community and volunteer groups/individuals)**

Friends of Griffiths Island – Port Fairy for 'Switch off for Shearwaters - Light Pollution Management'

**Embedding Traditional Owner cultural practices in management**

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation for 'Bukareeyoo - Returning Language to Country'

**Recognising emerging leadership**

Juliet Bảo Ngọc Doling

**Recognising individual achievement**

Joint-winners Neil Blake OAM and Mark Rodrigue

**Special award for service**

Dr Anthony Boxshall for his service to the Victorian Coastal Council (2015 – 2018) and as Chair of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council (2018 – 2024).

***Quotes attributable to Dr Anthony Boxshall, Outgoing Chair Victorian Marine and Coastal Council***

*"The 2024 Awards are an opportunity for connection and reflection as we come together to showcase the passion and diversity of projects being delivered across the State. We received 43 nominations, with finalists reflecting the diversity of the sector – from Traditional Owner and community groups, local government and Committees of Management, to not-for-profit groups and research institutions. A big 'thank you' to all the nominees for your contributions to caring for Victoria's marine and coastal environment."*

*"Looking back over recent years there's a lot for the sector to be proud of, including the remarkable work of the individuals, groups and organisations who are working together to care for Victoria's coast. The Victorian Marine and Coastal Council is thrilled to recognise and celebrate*

*the amazing work being done to sustainably protect and enhance the marine and coastal environment through the 2024 Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards.”*

