

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

Seagrass restoration pioneer honoured

Seagrass restoration pioneer Geoff Bastyan was named the twelfth winner of the prestigious GSDC Medal at a gala dinner in Albany on Friday 27 May.

Regional Development Minister Terry Redman presented Mr Bastyan with the medal and thanked him for his valuable contribution to the region.

The biennial GSDC Medal was established by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) in 2001 to celebrate best practice in the management of natural resources in the region.

Medal winners receive a \$12,000 grant from the GSDC to undertake further work in their field.

Mr Bastyan started self-funded monitoring of seagrasses in Albany's harbours in the 1980s, and initiated seagrass restoration efforts in spite of the prevailing opinion that degraded seagrass areas could not be restored.

His work, which has received international recognition, demonstrated that seagrass restoration was possible and it led to substantial improvements in the environmental health of Oyster Harbour and Princess Royal Harbour.

His knowledge, passion and ability to involve the local community has underpinned this success.

GSDC Deputy Chair Ross Thornton said the award was richly deserved.

"Geoff Bastyan's work shows that one dedicated person can make a difference and deliver natural resource outcomes that benefit everyone, not only in the region but also internationally," Mr Thornton said.

Four finalists were shortlisted for the award this year. The other three finalists, environmental planner Chris Gunby, Woodanilling farmer John Pickford, and Katanning land carers Adrian and Jill Richardson, each receive a \$2,000 grant to further their activities in managing the region's natural resources.



Building partnerships for regional prosperity

Albany Pyrmont House, 110 Serpentine Road, PO Box 280, Albany WA 6331. Phone: (08) 9842 4888 Fax: (08) 9842 4828 Email: gfdc@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Katanning 10 Dore Street, PO Box 729, Katanning WA 6317. Phone: (08) 9821 3210 Fax: (08) 9821 3334 Email: katanning@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Web: www.gfdc.wa.gov.au



The community will have the opportunity to learn more about Mr Bastyan's work at the GSDC Medal Field Day to be held in 2017.

Media contact: Bruce Manning, ph. 9842 4888



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