

SER2023 Awards Honor Exceptional Achievements and Rising Stars in Ecological Restoration

Winners announced for prestigious SER Awards, Bradshaw Medal, and the first Restoration Film Festival Competition in Darwin, Australia

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Society for Ecological Restoration \(SER\)](#) recognized significant achievements in restoration with [its 2023 Awards](#),

including advancement in environmental microbiology, inclusive approaches to Indigenous engagement, and innovations in communication that accelerate public awareness and participation in ecological restoration.

The Awards were announced at the 10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration in Darwin, Australia, alongside winners of the first Restoration Film Festival Competition and recipient of the SER2023 Offsets Funding Program.

Tom Kaye, Awards Committee Chair and member of the SER Board, said: "This year's recipients helped build important connections to advance restoration through scientific breakthroughs, innovative communication and powerful partnerships to restore unique habitats and protect endangered species. All of these incredible projects offer inspirational examples of the progress that can be made to accelerate research, engagement, and funding. The full membership congratulates all of our winners, and we thank them for their dedication to this vital restoration work."

2023 SER Awards:

John Rieger Award: Ms. Victoria Stubbs (USA) for her decades-long dedication to supporting every aspect of SER's development, and boosting engagement in restoration across the world and within the Southwest United States.



Left to right: Ms. Victoria Stubbs, Dr. Ferran Garcia-Pichel, Tropical Rainforest Conservation and Research Centre team, Bakan Jagdish Sudhakar (Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust), Njamasi Chiwanga (LEAD Foundation), Prof. David Suggett and Ms. Lorna

Theodore Sperry Award: Dr. Ferran Garcia-Pichel (USA) for his innovative research into the role of microbiology in ecological restoration.

Full Circle Award went to two recipients:

The Tropical Rainforest Conservation and Research Centre (Malaysia) for empowering Indigenous and local communities, and uniting multiple stakeholders in the pursuit of restoration as a tool for climate action and biodiversity conservation. And, Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust (India) for its work addressing the root causes of ecosystem degradation, and the role of restoration in alleviating poverty among Indigenous people – particularly women and girls.

Communication Award: The LEAD Foundation (Tanzania) reached more than 2 million people across Tanzania, many in rural villages, with innovative communications to activate, educate and inspire people to engage in ecological restoration.

Regional Awards – As the host country for SER2023, this year's Regional Awards went to two outstanding Australian organizations. The Coral Nurture Program is dedicated to evaluating scientific practices, stakeholder engagement, and financing models to support sustainable restoration on the Great Barrier Reef. And, Envite Environment with active restoration projects including extensive post bush-fire restoration, and partnerships for the recovery of koalas in NSW and endangered North Coast Emus.

Bradshaw Medal: Three scientific papers received recognition by the Restoration Ecology Editorial Board for significantly advancing the field; and will be free to read on the Wiley Online Library until 10 November 2023. Full details of the awards and winners [are available here](#).

Recipients were selected by the Awards Committee and approved by the SER Board of Directors after community nomination, with Bradshaw Medallists selected by Restoration Ecology editors. The Society would like to thank Mars, Inc, for its support of SER2023 as the Conference Awards sponsor.

The First Ecological Restoration Film Festival Competition:

SER2023 was host to the first Ecological Restoration Film Festival. The competition was open to existing and new films which embodied the principles of ecological restoration and explored the relationship between people, science, restoration, and the environment.

“We know that film is an incredibly powerful medium for communication, particularly in a scientific field like ecological restoration,” said Jillianne Segura, co-organizer of the Film Festival. “The idea behind the Festival was to create a platform that brings to life the complex and hopeful process of restoring degraded lands. In particular, we wanted to offer students and Indigenous people the opportunity to share their stories with this gathering of leading scientists and

practitioners at SER2023. We would like to congratulate the winners, and thank all those who entered and made this festival such an inspiring event.”

The SER Film Committee is delighted to congratulate this year's winners:

Best Student Film

Mussel Mania: Restoring New Zealand's Lost Mussel Reefs

Director: Trevyn Toone

Mussel reefs in New Zealand have been decimated by overharvesting. Now restoration projects are trying to bring them back.

Best Open Short Film

Cry Of The Glossy

Director: Tim Brown

Taking us on a journey through the forested hills of the NSW Southern Highlands (Australia), poet and Gunai woman, Kirli Saunders, reflects on the special place the endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo holds in her heart and culture.

Best Open Long Film

Gardening marine forests: A hands-on approach to restoration

Director: Stefan Andrews

What if people could be the secret to transforming ocean deserts into rich forests filled with an abundance of life? Join two marine scientists as they explore how a hands-on approach to marine restoration is working to revive marine kelp forests in South Korea.

SER2023 Offsets Program

In recognition of the environmental impact of the 10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration, the conference Organising Committee set aside a percentage of the conference expense budget to an ecological restoration project in Australia.

The Award is intended to emphasize that successful ecological restoration delivers a holistic suite of benefits for people and nature. Voted on by conference delegates, the winner of the offsets program was Nature Glenelg Trust's hydrological restoration at Minyumai Indigenous Protected Reserve, a project to halt and reverse the erosion and restore the natural hydrology of the recovering swamp forest.

More details about the environmental offsets program and all the finalists is available [here](#).

The Virtual Component of SER2023 will run from 7-8 November with sessions happening in both eastern and western hemisphere time zones. All registered delegates for both the in-person or virtual components of SER2023 will have access to all virtual presentations and recorded symposia, plenaries and oral presentations from the in-person conference once made available

online. An additional and final student award will also be announced.

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About the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER)

SER advances the science, practice and policy of ecological restoration to sustain biodiversity, improve resilience in a changing climate, and re-establish an ecologically healthy relationship between nature and culture. An international non-profit organization with over 5,000 members in more than 110 countries, we actively promote participatory, knowledge-based approaches to restoration. Learn more: www.ser.org

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