

2019 SA Environment Award winner biographies

Jill Hudson Award winner: Bunna Lawrie

Bunna Lawrie is a highly respected Senior Mirning Elder and is the Whale Songman and Ceremony man for the Mirning people, from the Nullarbor in the coastal lands and seas of south-west Australia.

In Mirning understanding, the Great Australian Bight remains pristine today due to the millennia of care by their ancestors. Bunna offers this wisdom to others, taking every opportunity to educate people, especially children, on how precious and important our environment is and how we can all participate in its protection.

As a founding partner in the Great Australian Bight Alliance, Bunna participates in paddle-outs, walks and other events across Australia and the world, notably travelling to Norway to engage with the Norwegian people, Parliament and the board of oil company Equinor on drilling in the Bight.

Bunna's passion for the protection of the environment and his sacred totem, the Southern Right Whale, became the subject of the award-winning film *The Whaledreamers*.

Despite facing significant layers of systemic prejudice, Bunna continuously follows his Mirning 'goonminyerra' friendly nature; forgiving and finding practical ways to work together.

Bunna creates opportunities for people to learn from one of the world's oldest living cultures in how we, as South Australians, Australians and people of the world, can maintain life and peace within nature.

Young Achiever Award winner: Doha Khan

At the age of 16, Doha co-founded the South Australian branch of School Strike 4 Climate and serves as one of the Lead National Organisers of the Australian School Strike 4 Climate movement.

Doha played a leading role in planning and coordinating the 2019 Adelaide School Strike 4 Climate and Global Strike 4 Climate, drawing combined crowds of more than 26,000 people.

Doha has also empowered young people to participate in the political process, fostering an environment where youth are empowered to create change and participate in their democracy.

All this was achieved while Doha juggled Year 12 and a range of other extracurricular commitments.

Unsung Hero winner: Margaret Hender

For many years, Margaret has been at the vanguard of South Australia's climate action.

In 2019 alone, Margaret steered Citizens Own Renewable Energy Network Australia to fund seven more renewable energy projects for community organisations and grow the CORENA revolving fund to almost \$300,000.

She has spearheaded the Getting off Gas campaign for local councils, and led political action with Fossil Free SA to advocate for a future free of new fossil fuels.

Margaret has also been at the leading edge of the climate emergency declaration campaign which has become a global movement adopted by local, state and national governments around the world.

2019 Lifetime Achiever Awards

Dr Helen Caldicott

Dr Helen Caldicott is a world-renowned, lifelong anti-nuclear campaigner. She has devoted the past 40 years to an international campaign to educate the public about the hazards of the nuclear age and the importance of environmental protection.

After starting her medical career in Adelaide, Helen relocated to the USA to take up appointments at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital until she resigned in 1980 to work full time on the prevention of nuclear war.

Throughout the 1970s Dr Caldicott played a major role in Australia's opposition to French nuclear testing in the Pacific and worked with Australian trade unions to educate their members about the medical dangers of the nuclear fuel cycle.

While living in the United States in the 1970s and '80s, she led Physicians for Social Responsibility whose international umbrella group was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

Dr Caldicott has received many prizes and awards for her work, including twenty one honorary doctoral degrees. She was personally nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in

1985, and the Smithsonian named her as one of the most influential women of the 20th Century.

Helen currently divides her time between Australia and the US, which is why she couldn't be here tonight. She is President of The Helen Caldicott Foundation, whose mission is the promotion of a nuclear-energy and weapons-free, renewable energy-powered world.

Dr John Coulter

For more than five decades, John Coulter has been an environmental activist at local, state and national level, advocating and taking action on a wide range of issues, including nuclear issues, population, nature protection, renewable energy and climate change.

As a medical researcher, university lecturer, politician, founding member of Conservation SA, and former president of the Australia Conservation Foundation – to name just a few! – John has contributed to countless medical, environment and sustainability organisations in his 50-year career.

In 1973 John successfully ran on an environmental platform for election to Campbelltown City Council after a campaign against large native trees in the area being cut down.

Throughout the '70s and '80s, John was an active critic of uranium mining and nuclear testing, campaigning against the proposed Redcliff petrochemical plant and the Roxby Downs Indenture Act.

As an Australian Democrats' Senator for SA in the '80s and '90s, John introduced bills to ban ozone-depleting substances and uranium enrichment, and the first national bill to protect threatened species. He also established the first major Senate Inquiry into Climate Change, calling for the introduction of a carbon tax in 1995.

John currently stands on the board of Sustainable Population Australia and continues to advocate for a sustainable future for South Australia.

Professor Mike Tyler

Professor Michael J. Tyler is known the world over as the Mike Tyler the Frog Man. As one of the world's foremost amphibian experts he has authored 22 publications and field guides, over 300 scientific papers and edited nine other books on amphibians in his 50 year career.

Originally from Britain, Mike has been in South Australia since the late 1950s, having been told by the British Museum that ground-breaking work on amphibians was best sought overseas.

Mike joined the University of Adelaide as a laboratory technician in 1961, rising through the academic ranks until he was appointed Associate Professor of Zoology in 1984 and awarded a doctorate of science in 2002.

Mike was a prominent researcher on the world-wide phenomenon of disappearance of frogs, notably in the two species of Australia gastric-brooding frog which were declared extinct shortly after their discovery.

He has been very public in the promotion of frogs as pets, as sources of potentially useful substances, and as an indicator of environmental quality, arguing that a species so important to humans must be protected.

Mike has also has been involved in a variety of nature documentaries, notably Nature of Australia and David Attenborough's Life on Earth series.

Amongst his countless awards and accolades, Mike has been awarded an Order of Australia, and a Nobel Prize in biology in 2005.

Eileen Kampakuta Brown AM*

Eileen Kampakuta Brown was a proud, strong Aboriginal woman. Recipient of an Order of Australia in 2003, Eileen was a powerful leader and activist who stood up for the rights of Aboriginal people, culture and country.

At every opportunity she would act as a voice not only for her people but for the animals, the water and the land.

In 2003 she was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize together with Eileen Wani Wingfield for their efforts to stop governmental plans for a nuclear waste dump in South Australia's desert land. Together with other Elder women, they formed the Cooper Pedy Women's Council (Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta) in 1995.

More than 50 years after the first nuclear bomb detonation in the South Australian desert, Aboriginal communities found themselves in another fight for their lives, with the threat of a nuclear waste dump. Brown, Wingfield, and the Kungka Tjuta led the successful campaign to stop the dump.

"People said that you can't win against the Government. Just a few women," they wrote in an open letter. "We just kept talking and telling them to get their ears out of

their pockets and listen. We never said we were going to give up. Government has big money to buy their way out but we never gave up."

Henry Jones*

Legendary Murray advocate Henry Jones was a tireless campaigner for the Lower Lakes and Coorong and played a key role in shaping the historic Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Henry was named as a finalist in the South Australia Senior Australian of the Year Award 2014 for his work in water conservation and was awarded a lifetime contribution at Alexandrina Council's Year of the Farmer Celebrations in 2012.

Henry's emotional plea for national reform to save the ailing system on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra in 2012 was so powerful it was credited as a game changer in the decades-long fight for River Murray reform.

Assistant Regional Development Minister Jamie Briggs said the Murray Darling Basin Plan would never have come to fruition if not for years of dedicated lobbying from Mr Jones.

His dedication to the River Murray was recognised in 2013, when he became the first member of the community to receive the River Murray Medal, awarded by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

Henry was the face of The Advertiser's I Love Murray campaign and perhaps the most influential figure in influencing the implementation of a plan to save the Murray-Darling Basin, and the environment and people who rely on it.

*awarded posthumously