

MEDIA RELEASE

01 March 2019

Crikey clan named *Tourism Legends* at Australian Tourism Awards

Australian conservationists and proud Queenslanders, the Irwin family, have been honoured with the coveted *Australian Tourism Legend Award* at the 2018 Australian Tourism Awards in Launceston, Tasmania.

Announced at a ceremony overlooking the idyllic Cataract Gorge, the *Australian Tourism Legend* award recognises the extraordinary personal and professional achievements and contributions by an individual or family over many years to the Australian tourism industry.

Chair of the Australian Tourism Awards and Queensland Tourism Industry Council CEO Daniel Gschwind said the Irwin family's achievements in tourism, conservation and research stretched from Queensland right around the globe.

"The Irwin family's contribution to conservation and research has created a lasting legacy that will benefit Queenslanders and Australians for generations to come," Mr Gschwind said.

The Irwins join the likes of Paul Hogan, Harvey Lister and Geoff McGeary who were each honoured with the *Australian Tourism Legend Award* in 2017, 2016 and 2015 respectively.

"We couldn't be prouder of how the Irwins have showcased Queensland and Australia to the world, and of their ongoing dedication to championing an international appreciation for wildlife, education and the need for conservation.

"The Irwins truly are Queensland and Australian tourism legends."

Since taking over Australia Zoo from Steve's parents in 1992 Terri and Steve Irwin, with the help of their children Bindi and Robert, have worked tirelessly to expand the wildlife park and make it the world-class attraction it is today.

Contributing significantly to the local Sunshine Coast economy, the Irwin family employs more than 440 staff members – 73 per cent of whom reside on the Coast – alongside a cohort of 165 regular volunteers.

Australia Zoo is unmistakably a major contributor to the Sunshine Coast region and continues to stimulate the local economy by supporting local businesses and attracting more than 800,000 visitors to the park annually.

The dedicated family will continue their mission to emphasise the important role that tourism plays in protecting our environment and ensuring the benefits of our destinations are maintained for generations to come.

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More information is available at www.australianaward.com.au or www.qtic.com.au.

– ENDS –

Note for Media:

- Media are asked to refrain from contacting award recipients until after **10.30pm on Friday 1 March 2019**.
- Images from the winning entries and operators are available upon request.
- A full list of Queensland finalists can be provided upon request.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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2018 Australian Tourism Award Winners – Queensland

Individual		
The Irwin family	Australian Tourism Legend	Sunshine Coast, Queensland
GOLD		
BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort	Caravan and Holiday Parks	Whitsundays
Fun Over Fifty	Ecotourism	Brisbane
Bundaberg Rum Visitor Experience	Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries	Bundaberg
Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers	Major Festivals and Events – Hall of Fame	Southern Queensland Country
Mount Isa Mines Rotary Rodeo	Festivals and Events	Outback
Red Cat Adventures	Major Tour and Transport Operators	Whitsundays
SILVER		
Capricorn Caves	Tourist Attractions	Capricorn
Grand Hotel and Apartments Townsville	Standard Accommodation	Townsville
Small World Journeys	Specialised Tourism Services	Tropical North Queensland

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Sarina Sugar Shed	Excellence in Food Tourism	Mackay
Paronella Park	Cultural Tourism	Tropical North Queensland
Ocean Safari	Tour and Transport Operators	Tropical North Queensland
Cobbold Village	Hosted Accommodation	Outback/Tropical North Queensland
Whitsunday Escape	Unique Accommodation	Whitsundays
BRONZE		
Novotel Twin Waters Resort	Business Event Venues	Sunshine Coast
RACV Royal Pines Resort	Luxury Accommodation	Gold Coast
Mossman Gorge Centre	Qantas Award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism	Tourism Tropical North Queensland