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Australian National Botanic Gardens

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MEDIA RELEASE

Botanic Gardens wins third Ecotourism award

The Australian National Botanic Gardens won the Ecotourism category of the 2004 Rhodium Canberra and Capital Region Tourism Awards, announced at Parliament House on Friday night.

“The Gardens is an extremely important part of the Canberra landscape for residents and visitors, and has enormous scientific and aesthetic value for the nation” said Director Mr Robin Nielsen. “Our collection of almost 100,000 plants includes almost 7000 species – nearly half of the total number of Australia’s flowering plants.”

“The Gardens provides visitors with a memorable experience of the beauty and diversity of Australia’s native flora and is recognised both nationally and internationally for its role in promoting the protection, conservation and wise use of Australian native plants.”

“Last year the Gardens attracted 447,000 visitors, an increase of more than 18% over the previous year,” said Mr Nielsen. “Surveys indicate that 57% of visitors are drawn from the Canberra region, and 43% are from interstate and overseas.”

“The award recognises the achievements of all Gardens’ staff in creating a beautiful and engaging public garden that brings together our scientific, educational and public elements. Major highlights of the last twelve months have been the dedication of the first Public Art commission, the completion of a new state of the art production nursery, and the Gardens’ first artist in residence project.”

The Gardens is part of the Australian Government’s Department of the Environment and Heritage and in 1991 was placed on the Register of the National Estate. In June 2004 the Gardens was placed on the Commonwealth Heritage List that includes over 50 sites in the ACT as natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places on Commonwealth land. The Commonwealth Heritage List is the successor to the Register of the National Estate.

The Gardens won the Ecotourism category of the Canberra & Capital Region awards in 2002 and 2003. Winners in each of the State and Territory awards automatically qualify for entry into the annual Australian Tourism Awards, announced next February in Alice Springs.

The awards are recognised within the industry as a mark of an organisation’s success during the year and are sought after, not only as a reward for hard work and achievement, but also because of the marketing opportunities that winner status can provide.

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