

# Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Environment protection award for GORCC

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) has been awarded the 2011 Clean Beaches Award for the Protection of the Environment in recognition of the organisation's efforts to protect endangered Hooded Plovers.

Hooded Plovers are already extinct in Queensland and New South Wales while approximately 400 remain in Victoria, and since 2006 GORCC has been working with Birds Australia and other partners to protect hooded plover breeding sites.

GORCC Coastal Project Manager Mike Bodsworth said the award was recognition of the dedicated efforts of the GORCC Conservation Team and Birds Australia Volunteers.

"Without the work of the volunteers or our partnership with Birds Australia, the success of the program would not be possible.

"Credit must also go to our dedicated Conservation Team, which works hard to give these little chicks the best chance of survival," he said.

GORCC's work includes working with Birds Australia to coordinate Hooded Plover Volunteers who monitor the birds and ensure a continuous flow of information which enables the measurement of success rates.

Each year during the Hooded Plover breeding season, GORCC installs signs to alert people to nesting areas and establishes protective fencing around nesting areas.

"Unfortunately the hooded plover's breeding habits put them in direct conflict with humans and animals and signage and fencing needs to be put in place to protect them from being trampled or eaten.

"For this reason, Point Roadknight has also been designated a 'no-dogs' zone for wildlife protection purposes.

"Our staff also carry out regular beach patrols and are plover 'wardens' over the breeding season, advising beachgoers of the need to be aware of these precious chicks," said Mr. Bodsworth.

Until recently, Point Roadknight was the Hooded Plover's only known regular breeding site on the Surf Coast but in 2011 Hooded Plover chicks hatched at Point Impossible, requiring GORCC and the volunteers to extend their efforts.

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee was named a finalist in 6 award categories for the 2011 Clean Beaches Awards for a range of projects and initiatives, all of which are based on the protection and enhancement of the local coastal environment.

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*Caring for the coast and community*

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More information about hooded plovers and how you can help to protect them can be found at [www.gorcc.com.au](http://www.gorcc.com.au) .

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