

Award for 'Landmark' Freshwater Fish Research

The annual presentation of the Whitley Awards by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales recognises publications considered to make landmark contributions toward the understanding and dissemination of zoological knowledge in Australia. The most prestigious of these awards, the Whitley Medal, was this year awarded to Rainforest CRC researchers, Brad Pusey, Mark Kennard and Angela Arthington of Griffith University, for their book *Freshwater Fishes of North-Eastern Australia* (CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria). The medal will be shared jointly with Hugh Tyndale-Biscoe for his book *Life of Marsupials*.

The Whitley Medal is the most sought after prize in zoological publishing in Australia and is only presented when a

book is considered to be of exceptional value in relating information on the fauna of the Australasian region. The Whitley Medal was presented to the authors at a ceremony held at the Australian Museum in Sydney on 16 September this year. "We are excited about the recognition," said co-author Brad Pusey. "We hope it raises awareness not only about the book, but also of the current threats to the region's unique fauna and the need for good research and informed management."

Highlighted in the January 2005 edition of *Forest Matters*, the 684 page, hardcover book is the culmination of ten years of research by the team and was officially launched during the *Healthy Country, Healthy Reef* joint conference in Cairns in November 2004 by Senator Ian Macdonald, Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation.

Freshwater Fishes of North-Eastern Australia is a reference book designed to assist scientific researchers, environmental managers, students, hobbyists and recreational fishers alike by providing them with information on the ecology, biogeography and management of seventy-nine species of native freshwater fish found in North Queensland.

The book includes a key for species identification as well as information on feeding, breeding and movement patterns of freshwater fish. Current threats to fish and their environment have also been identified and management strategies recommended.

The project forms part of the *Catchment to Reef* joint program of the Rainforest CRC and CRC Reef. Copies of the book are available on-line through CSIRO publishing (www.publish.csiro.au).



From left, Mark Kennard, Dave Pollard (recently retired head of New South Wales Fisheries), Brad Pusey, Angela Arthington and Jennifer Griggs (representing CSIRO Publishing) at the award presentation (Image: Moira Pusey).