



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 31 May 2006

NEW RANGER-ECOLOGIST APPOINTED AT INTERNATIONALLY-REOWNED BANROCK STATION

Internationally-renowned Banrock Station today announced the appointment of Miss Ruth Coates as Ranger/Ecologist.

In her new role, Miss Coates, 24, will be responsible for all aspects of the ecological management of Banrock Station, at Kingston-on-Murray, in South Australia's Riverland, including its:

- ❑ Threatened Species Recovery Program.
- ❑ Ramsar Wetland Management Plan.
- ❑ Landscape recovery.
- ❑ Revegetation and wetland management.
- ❑ Community and Government liaison, and;
- ❑ Environmental education and interpretation.

Miss Coates graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Sydney University in 2002, with majors in both Biology and Marine Science.

In recent years, she has worked on research programs with the New South Wales and Queensland departments of primary industries.

Miss Coates has a personal passion for the recovery of endangered native mammals, developed through volunteer work at Arid Recovery at Roxby Downs, studying the ecology of burrowing bettongs, eastern bilbies, greater stick-nest rats and western barred bandicoots.

Banrock Station Manager, Mr Tony Sharley, said: "Ruth brings a wealth of passion and experience to the position.

"Her appointment signals a new and exciting chapter for the property, as it allows us to nurture and build on all the great work undertaken at Banrock Station as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention," he said.

"Apart from her day-to-day responsibilities, Ruth will take a lead role in many other exciting projects planned for the near future – including the expansion of our Threatened Species Recovery Program."

Miss Coates is originally from Cowra, in New South Wales, where coincidentally, her family has strong interests in the wine industry.

“Being appointed Ranger/Ecologist at Banrock Station is an opportunity of a lifetime,” said Miss Coates

“The property is unique in Australia in the way in which it combines conservation with business,” she said.

“The diversity of the programs currently underway, together with the plans we have for future programs, makes this an incredibly exciting and challenging business in which to be involved.

“Banrock Station is known throughout the world for its commitment to conservation. I look forward to the many challenges that lie ahead in enhancing the property’s global reputation.”

Background

Banrock Station Wines is recognised internationally for its pioneering concept of funding environmental projects by donating part proceeds of every worldwide purchase of its wines.

Since its launch 10 years ago, the leading eco-wine maker has donated more than \$3 million to help restore and/or rehabilitate more than 60 wetlands in 11 countries throughout the world, including six wetlands in South Australia.

Four years ago, Banrock Station won the most prestigious wetland conservation award in the world – the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award – for its commitment to wetland restoration.

Last year, it launched its Threatened Species Recovery Program, which has seen the re-introduction of Eastern bilbies and brush-tailed bettongs into their former range, where they have been extinct for nearly 100 years.

The jewel in the Banrock Station crown is its world-renowned wetlands at Kingston-on-Murray, on the River Murray, in South Australia’s Riverland, which consist of 1375 hectares of ecologically significant land, including 1068 hectares of River Murray floodplain wetlands.

As part of Banrock Station’s designation under the Ramsar Convention as a Wetland of International Importance, a management plan was developed that identified threats that could have a detrimental impact on the ecological character of the area.

The wetlands provide a natural habitat for two nationally vulnerable species – the Regent Parrot and the Southern Bell Frog, as well as supporting 166 bird species, including several migratory birds – the Great Egret, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Greenshank, Red-necked Stint, Long-toed Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Fork-tailed Swift and Caspian Tern.