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Lloyd Willmann (back row 2nd from left) presents the Award to the Carp Busters crew

### Ron Dempster Award

The Ron Dempster Award is given to an individual for outstanding contribution to the enhancement of recreational fishing in Queensland.

The guidelines are;

- The recipient is nominated by the State Executive
- The recipient does not have to be an ANSA member
- The award does not have to be bestowed annually
- The award is announced during the Annual

Conference

When we look at some of the former recipients, Vic McCristal, Bruce Alvey, and Gerry Cook, to name just a few, and these days that list is growing, its not hard to see first the calibre of the recipients but also the type of people we have in the recreational fishing arena.

This year the State Executive has deviated slightly to nominate a very worthy group of recipients called the "Carp Busters."

The 'Carp Out – Natives In' concept was started by a small group of concerned anglers in the Rathdowney / Beaudesert area to get introduced noxious carp out of the Logan and Albert River systems and replace them with native fish.

## Events

**Its a new year and a new length comp!**

**Why not fish in the ANSA QLD Length Comp!**

Runs all year to 30th June 2015

Open to all ANSA QLD members

**Junior and Senior Categories**

**The North Queensland Sportfishing Championships will be on 6th & 7th June Put it in your calander now**



Tired of watching Carp flourish and seeing little, if any action taken by those who manage our fisheries, they decided that the best way to achieve their aims was to hold a big community based fishing competition, catch as many carp as possible and use the money raised by the comp to purchase native fish fingerlings to be put into the river system.

The first "Carpbusters Annual Easter Carp Eradication Competition" was held in 1997 and it was a major success. Every Easter since then, approximately 1500 anglers have been involved in each competition. To date, the annual Easter Carp Eradication Competition has taken 10 tonnes of carp out of the Logan and Albert River catchment and raised over \$65,000 to purchase thousands of Australian Bass and Mary River Cod fingerlings for a native fish stocking program.

Perhaps Carpbusters greatest success is that a small group of hard working volunteers has put the Logan and Albert River systems on the map for future commitment from Local, State and Federal Governments to look at the Carp problem in these rivers. Most importantly, the federally funded (Australian Invasive Animal Co-operative Research Centre) AIACRC is planning carp control trials (i.e. daughterless carp) in the Logan and Albert catchment in the near future.

It has just been released that funding has now been approved for a 5yr project starting in September this year.

This project basically got the nod because of all the hard ground work and lobbying put in by Carpbusters i.e. they already have the property owners, local council and the general public on side and are a ready made community group to assist the CRC.

From an idea to get recreational anglers to do something about the carp problem in the Albert and Logan River catchments and at the same time put some balance back into these rivers by stocking with Australian Bass and Mary River Cod, the annual Easter Carp Eradication Competition developed into a major Queensland Event, encompassing local and state governments, business and industry, landowners, media and the community.

As the Carp Comps grew, so did the requirements for public liability insurance, event organisation planning and the risk management. These factors, along with changes to work and family commitments of the small core group of committed and passionate people who have spent thousands of volunteer hours to make this yearly event so successful, has for now, sadly brought to an end, an era of Carpbuster Easter Comps.

Carpbusters can be very proud of what they have achieved over the past 7 years and although saddened by not being able to continue to organise the big Easter comp, they will be assisting the AIACRC with its on ground scientific studies

The developed friendships and partnerships are set to continue into the future, with continued stocking of native fingerlings and focus on developing a recreational native fish management plan for the Logan and Albert Rivers in the Beaudesert Shire. The process should see improved public access areas, signage and detailed brochures on the species in the rivers, with information on size, bag limits, closed seasons, protected

species and sustainable fishing practices.

Beyond these what might be called tangible successes, without doubt, the greatest contribution Carpbusters have made to the future of recreational fishing in Qld is by educating so many of the community at large about noxious fish and their effects on fish populations and the environment.

Carpbusters message is simple and straightforward - and perhaps the best part about it is that the people, at the fishing comps at least, actually quite enjoyed being "educated" about noxious fish. Whether some of the bureaucrats and politicians have "enjoyed" their education at the hands of Carpbusters we're not sure.

That the annual Easter fishing competition has unfortunately been cancelled at present only means that Carpbusters have lost one string to their bow - albeit their most effective one - while their good work continues on other fronts.

The citation for our Ron Dempster Award states "For Exceptional Contribution to the Future of Recreational Fishing in Queensland."

ANSA Qld feels that Carpbusters contribution is truly exceptional and it's with pride that we acknowledge Carpbusters, and add them to the short list of outstanding people who have received this award.

Jim Walsh (president of Carpbusters) and his wife Rose (equally as passionate) were to be here today but unfortunately couldn't make it due to work commitments. So I'll ask Lloyd Willmann to come up here are receive the award on their behalf.

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