

EcoGuide Certification - a Reward for Great Cave Guides!

Regina Roach from Yarrangobilly Caves was certified as an EcoGuide at the recent ACKMA Guide School at Naracoorte Caves. Regina has been a dedicated guide at Yarrangobilly for over twenty years, showcasing the caves and surrounding landscapes to a wide range of guests and participating in research and other projects with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Regina is a wonderful example of how the assessment and acknowledgement of tour guides can reward experienced guides as well as those building a career.



Regina Roach (left) and Amanda Hinton

The EcoGuide Program offers an accessible certification that addresses the guiding skills and provides a tangible reward for great performance.

The benefits of becoming an EcoGuide include:

- Practical guidance to implement sustainable practices and give more meaningful experiences to visitors
- A recognised industry qualification and competitive edge in the tourism market
- Friends of Savannah Guides Membership and networking with over 500 nature-based guides and operators
- Discounts to the annual Global ECO Conference and Savannah Guides Field Schools.

To be eligible for EcoGuide Certification you must have at least 12 months' guiding experience, or hold a guiding qualification (eg Certificate III or IV in Guiding) and have a minimum of three months' full-time guiding experience.

The EcoGuide Certification process uses a workbook and guiding assessment to examine:

Generic Guiding Skills, including knowledge of the tourism industry; roles and responsibilities of a guide; communication skills; safety and risk management; group management; developing and delivering tour activities; and content knowledge

EcoGuide Specific Skills, including minimal impact principles; a commitment to ongoing professional development; and respecting Indigenous culture.

Savannah Guides runs the EcoGuide program to help individuals achieve certification and work with attractions to integrate EcoGuide into their training and staff reward systems. The cost per guide is \$130 to apply and \$99 per year (discounts for groups).

Please e-mail Sam or Russell at info@savannah-guides.com.au or call 0408 772 513 for more information.

Field Schools with Savannah Guides

ACKMA members and friends are welcome to join Savannah Guides at their Field Schools across northern Australia. The next Field School will be in the Atherton Tablelands, near Cairns, from 14-17 November 2019, and the registration fee of around \$495 covers all activities, food and transport over the four days. The next Field School will be held in Kununurra in April 2020.

Wet Tropics Field Schools are also held twice a year for two days, with one in late 2019.