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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **STEVE IRWIN UNVEILS THE PERTH MINT'S DISCOVER AUSTRALIA COIN PROGRAM**

**BRISBANE:** Steve Irwin, aka the Crocodile Hunter, today launched Discover Australia, The Perth Mint's latest collector coin program, at Rydges South Bank.

Struck from pure gold, silver and platinum in proof quality, the three-year coin program comprises 45 designs depicting iconic Australian fauna, flora and landmarks. Conceived and developed with leading Australian and overseas coin dealers, the program will further boost sales of Australian collector coins - and Australian precious metals - worldwide.

Steve Irwin, who unveiled the first 15 designs, including a dramatic interpretation of a Saltwater Crocodile from the Fauna Gold Series, said people all over the world were fascinated by the Australian continent and its remarkable wildlife. "Australia has been isolated from the rest of the world for millions of years and we've developed some of the best wildlife, geography and plants that make us stand out from most other countries. And Crikey, I am very proud to see our fauna, flora and landmarks honoured on this gorgeous coin collection. What a little beauty!" he said.

Discover Australia is the natural successor to The Perth Mint's renowned Australian Nugget, Australian Kookaburra and Australian Koala proof coin series, previously Australia's most prestigious precious metal releases. The Mint's Chief Executive Officer, Ed Harbuz, said the new program would be welcomed by collectors who regarded Australian legal tender issued by The Perth Mint as examples of the finest proof quality minting in the world.

"As the new flagship of The Perth Mint, Discover Australia guarantees collectors the purest precious metals, the highest standards of minting craftsmanship and strictly enforced mintage limits," he said. "Each design, further enhanced by the use of colour on the Landmarks Silver Series and the Flora Platinum Series, will be eagerly sought after as a wonderful symbol of the nation."

In a departure from its traditional release strategy, the Mint will issue Discover Australia coins with new designs each January, March, May, July and September during 2006, 2007 and 2008.

As well as a Saltwater Crocodile, the Fauna Gold Series features 2006-dated designs portraying a Grey Kangaroo, Emu, Koala and Kookaburra. Each design will be carried on no more than 1,000 1/2oz, 2,500 1/10oz, and 25,000 1/25oz coins struck from 99.99% pure gold in proof quality.

In the first year of the program, the Silver Landmarks Series features designs portraying Melbourne, Uluru, Canberra, Perth, and the Great Barrier Reef. Each design will be carried on no more than 7,500 1oz coins struck from 99.9% pure silver in proof quality.

In 2006, the Flora Platinum Series features designs depicting five State and Territory floral emblems: the Cooktown Orchid (Queensland); Sturt's Desert Rose (Northern Territory); Royal Bluebell (Australian Capital Territory); Red and Green Kangaroo Paw (Western Australia); and Common Pink Heath (Victoria). Each design will be carried on no more than 1,000 1/2oz and 2,500 1/10oz coins struck from 99.95% pure platinum in proof quality.

To ensure impact, visibility and recognition of Discover Australia as Australia's leading collectable coin program, the Mint has developed a memorable coloured logo and graphics for its packaging. Prestigious presentation cases, featuring lids in a variety of native hardwoods, also reinforce the program's Australian character.

Discover Australia is available from The Perth Mint by calling toll free on 1800 098 817, through The Perth Mint Shop located at 310 Hay Street, East Perth, Australia Post outlets, leading coin dealers, and via the web at [www.perthmint.com.au](http://www.perthmint.com.au) or [www.discoveraustralia.org.au](http://www.discoveraustralia.org.au)

**PICTURE EDITORS:** Images of the Discover Australia coin program can be downloaded from [www.perthmint.com.au/gc/distributors/DiscoverAustralia.asp](http://www.perthmint.com.au/gc/distributors/DiscoverAustralia.asp)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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Footnote: The historic Perth Mint, founded in 1899, manufactures and markets Australian legal tender investor and collector coins nationally and internationally under a unique agreement with the Commonwealth of Australia. Since 1987, Gold Corporation, the operator of the Mint, has sold more than 14 million coins, representing 545 tonnes of Australian precious metals, of which 12 million coins valued at an estimated \$2.7 billion have been exported to the United States, Europe, Asia, Japan and the Middle East.