
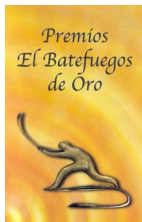




Spain

 MINISTERIO DE MEDIO AMBIENTE	The Awards “El Batefuegos De Oro” (The Golden Swatter) 2002	
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In 2002 the Spanish NGO “APAS” has created the Award "El Batefuegos de Oro" (The Golden Swatter). With the sponsorship of the Ministry of Environment the awards are given to distinguished persons and organizations with outstanding merits in forest protection against fire. There are seven categories according specialities.

The National Jury met on 7 November 2002 and granted the following Awards:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Awards</u>
Prevention	Regional Forest Protection Services in Comunidad Valenciana (Dirección General de Recursos Forestales)
Suppression	Foresters working like Crew Bosses of the BRIFs (Hot Shots)
Education	Sagrado Corazón-Corazonistas School, Vitoria
Mass media	News Agency EFE, Madrid
R & D	Forest Research Station, Lourizán, Pontevedra
International	The Australian Services with responsibilities of protection against forest fires.
Special awards	- J. Alberto Blanco, Villardeciervos, Zamora, a bulldozer operator - Ignacio del Moral, Madrid, a play writer for the sensibilization rural campaigns - Agustín Fonseca, Madrid, the creator of a children game to explain strategy against forest fires in the sensibilization school campaigns

The Awards were presented to the winners on 27 November 2002, in the Salón de Actos of the National Research Council, Madrid The facts considered by the Jury to distinguish the winners were in summary the following:

1. PREVENTION AWARD

Regional Forest Protection Services in Comunidad Valenciana.

This region, at the East of the Iberian Peninsula, was blackened by large fires from the 1970s till the year 1994. A prevention plan established after that year has achieved:

- to reduce the annual number of fires
- to identify the fire cause in 100 per cent of cases
- to mobilize more than 4000 volunteers every year
- to prevent carelessness and arson
- to intensify fuel management
- to reduce the annual burned surface from 4 per cent of the woodland regional surface at the beginning of the 90's to 0,3 per cent at the beginning of this millenium.

2. SUPPRESSION AWARD

The foresters working like Crew Bosses of the BRIF's.

These BRIF's are heli crews, like the American Hot Shots, intended to control large fires, helping the local brigades after 1992.

3. COMMUNICATION AWARD

News Agency EFE, Madrid.

This is the largest news agency in Spain. Its staff devotes great attention to the information on forest fires every fire season, always with high objectivity, creating public sensitivity for fire prevention.

4. EDUCATION AWARD

Sagrado Corazón-Corazonistas School, Vitoria.

This School has participated during more than 10 years in the national education campaigns for prevention directed to the children between 10 and 16.

5. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Forest Research Station, Lourizán, Pontevedra.

This Station started 25 years ago its Research Program on Fire Management, contributing to improve the general performance of the National and Regional Forest Fire Services.

The Station team has developed fire behaviour models and studied fire effects as a basis for the use of prescribed burning in fuel management and to promote healthy practices in silviculture and reforestation.

6. INTERNATIONAL AWARD

The Australian Services with responsibilities in fire management.

The Australian Services with responsibilities of protection against forest fires were nominated for the International Award by the Area de Defensa contra Incendios Forestales (National Forest Fire Service, DGCN, Ministry of Environment, Madrid) taking into account

- the formidable task accomplished fighting the huge fires started on 24 December 2001, during one month, protecting lives and properties all along the mountains in Eastern Australia without victims. A task that the Australian population has well recognized.
- the help given to the Southeast Asian countries when the El Niño fires (1997-1998) and to the USA in 2000 and 2002.

7. SPECIAL AWARDS

7.1 J. Alberto Blanco, Villadecievros, Zamora.

He has a small company operating bulldozers for forestry and fire management. On 16 September 2002 his son Alberto suffered an accident when the dozer he was driving in a large fire turned upside down. The following day Mr. Blanco, after his son's burial, returned to the fire to continue working in the suppression.

7.2 Ignacio del Moral, Madrid.

He is a theater author who has written four plays presenting the tragic reality of rural fires. After 1990 these plays have been performed before thousands of people in rural villages in prevention campaigns.

7.3. Agustín Fonseca, Madrid

He is a creator of games who developed in the 1980s a strategy game simulating the typical fire suppression operations. This game has been used in the education campaigns, teaching to thousands of children the difficulties to manage forest fires.

Madrid, November 2002