



The Royal Society
of Western Australia

Promoting Science since 1914

PO Box 7026, Karawara,
Western Australia 6152
secretary@rswa.org.au
ABN: 52 760 771 990

www.rswa.org.au

Medal of The Royal Society of Western Australia

The Medal of The Royal Society of Western Australian 1924 was instituted in 1924 as an award for outstanding work in science, and was to be known as the Royal Society's Medal or, more formally, the Medal of The Royal Society of Western Australia. It was inaugurated to mark the centenary of the birth of Lord Kelvin on 26 June 1824. There have been 24 distinguished recipients of the Medal from 1924 to 2010.

On 19 July 2018 The RSWA was pleased to announce two medal winners for 2018
one of whom is the distinguished scientist

Professor Barbara York Main



Professor Barbara York Main is the first female recipient of the RSWA Medal since it was awarded in 1924. Barbara's husband Emeritus Professor Albert Russell Main was awarded the Medal in 1995 for Zoology, ecology and nature conservation.

Professor Barbara York Main has been a pioneer and expert in the field of arachnology. Born in 1929 in Kellerberrin WA, in 1956 she was the first woman to receive a PhD in the Zoology Department of UWA, followed by the award of an Alice Hamilton Fellowship. In 1958 she worked at the prestigious British Museum. Over her long career she has extensively travelled for field studies and to study spider collections in Australian museums and around the world. For seven years she was an Honorary Entomology Consultant at the Poisons Information Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. Since 1952, Barbara has had teaching experience at UWA with Lectureship progressing to a Professorship in 1996. Barbara's work on arachnids, including extensive publications from 1952 to 2012, a writer of four books, and a long list of co-authored publications, have brought spiders to the front of people's minds in terms of conservation and the sharing knowledge about them. 19 species of arachnid have been named in her honour. She has been a valued Trustee at the Western Australian Museum. Her appointments have included the Australian Biological Resources Study Advisory Committee and Centre International Documentation Arachnology (Paris). Barbara has been an inspirational role model for women in science, where her contributions in the fields of arachnology and biology more generally have been recognised by the award of the Order of Australia.