



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

LANDCARE VICTORIA 2019 AWARDS

Friday 30th August 2019

The Honourable Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Solar Homes

Mr John Bradley, Secretary, Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

Mr Doug Humann AM, Chairman, Landcare Australia

Mr David Clark, Chairman, Landcare Victoria

Dr Gillian Sparkes, Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

It is particularly fitting that we reflect on and acknowledge that Australia's first people have, for millennia, provided care for the land and the water around us.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome you to Government House for the 2019 Landcare Victoria awards.

I am a proud Patron-in-Chief of Landcare Victoria, knowing that although Landcare Australia is this year celebrating the wonderful achievement of its 30th anniversary, Landcare Victoria is in fact celebrating its 33rd year.

We have the 'founding mothers' to thank for that: the late Joan Kirner AC (then Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands), and Heather Mitchell (then President of the Victorian Farmers Federation) who, with the generous support of community members, farmers and departmental officers, launched 'Landcare' in central Victoria in November 1986.

What a matter of joy and pride to see how Landcare swiftly grew beyond Victoria's borders, not only across Australia, but in 20 other countries as well. And to see how it has evolved.

Today, Landcare has been extended to Coastcare, Bushcare, Dunecare, Rivercare, 'Friends of' groups and Junior Urban and Indigenous Landcare groups.

Together, these groups play a leading role in changing Australia's approach to sustainable agricultural practices, environmental protection, and conservation of land, waterways and biodiversity.

Never have I been more conscious of the fragility of our ecosystems than earlier this year when, in my role as Patron of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires 10th Anniversary Commemorations, Tony and I spent several weeks visiting affected areas, listening to the stories of heartache and devastation.

Importantly, we also saw the positive effects of the restorative work and regrowth, thanks to the many professionals and the army of environmental volunteers, including Landcarers, Friends groups and wildlife carers.

One of the best testaments to the wonderful work of Landcare Victoria and its volunteers will be the citations read out here today. They will inspire us with the cleverness, variety and commitment that underpins each one of them.

Indeed, every person and group nominated for an award has made an invaluable contribution to our environment. We are grateful.

We must thank Landcare Australia's Chairman Doug Humann AM and the Board of Directors, Victorian Chairman Mr David Clark and the Committee of Management.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Landcare Victoria for organising and judging these Awards, and the sponsors for their support.

Finally, 'good luck' to the State winners representing Victoria at the National Landcare Awards in 2020, and 'Happy Landcare Week' next week.

Now it is my pleasure to invite Minister Lily D'Ambrosio to address us.