



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

**VICTORIAN LANDCARE AWARDS 2021**  
**Friday 26 November 2021**

Let me start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which I am standing and by paying my respects to Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be a part of this virtual event today.

On an occasion on which we celebrate work that goes towards sustaining and protecting the environment, of course we appreciate that our First Nations people have cared for this land for tens of thousands of years.

As Patron-in-Chief of Landcare Victoria, I am delighted to join you to celebrate the 2021 Victorian Landcare Awards.

Of course, I wish we were welcoming you here at Government House, as had been the original plan, but I am pleased that nevertheless we have the means to come together.

For decades now, these Awards have celebrated all forms of environmental protection and the conservation of our land and landscapes, our waterways, coastlines, and our biodiversity.

But I think it is fair to say that across the last two years we have seen particularly outstanding contributions from many individuals and organisations.

As we are all well aware, the devastating summer bushfires of 2019/2020 were immediately followed by the pandemic.

It was a dual blow to the normal Landcare activities, most particularly with periods during which some enthusiastic volunteers had their wings clipped, as it were, during lockdowns.

And so this occasion enables us to say a very special 'thank you' to all of the environmental volunteer groups, networks and Friends groups across Victoria who have rallied in the wake of these twin challenges.

During regional visits around the State, we have seen first-hand some of the projects undertaken.

Whether we have met farmers who work continuously to devise new and improved ways to protect the land, or volunteers replanting along waterways denuded by fire, the stewardship and enduring commitment to our natural environment, has been truly uplifting.

What a pleasure it is to highlight some of the best of this work today, noting that this year marks 35 years of Landcare in Victoria.

And, it is an additional pleasure that, to celebrate its 30th anniversary, we are being joined by the Victorian Environmental Friends Network, with their Best Friends Awards.

All of you, our nominees today, help to make our environment better. But your contributions go far beyond that. You help to make our community better. And stronger.

I welcome the opportunity to give a heartfelt thank you to every contributor.

I also want to thank the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Landcare Victoria for coordinating these Awards.

They have done so in challenging circumstances, so everyone connected with this event can take pride in the achievement.

Of course, I also thank the sponsors for their support.

That leaves me only to say congratulations to all the nominees across each of the categories – and ‘well done and good luck’ to those who will go on to represent our State at the 2022 National Landcare Awards.