



2005 Victorian Landcare Awards

National categories Winners

Presented on 7th September at Government House

National Landcare Program Individual Award

Winner: Andrew McArthur

Andrew (Stretch) McArthur, his wife and three children operate a 1500 hectare sheep, beef and cropping property west of Bairnsdale. The property has been in the family since 1890 and Stretch's influence can be felt much further than the farm gate. His involvement in Landcare started in 1981 with the Bairnsdale Farm Tree Group, he is a founding member and inaugural chair of the Tom's Creek Landcare Group and the current chair of the East Gippsland Landcare Network. Stretch says Landcare is what you make of it.

Highly Commended: Kevin Heggen

Murray-Darling Basin Commission Rivercare Award

Winner: Peter Ebner

An irrigator of some 20 years in Irymple, Peter Ebner and his wife Luise grow Shiraz grapes for the production of wine under drip irrigation. It was his innovative idea to encourage Mallee Catchment Region irrigators to donate water to stressed and dying river redgums that impressed the judges for this category. Passionate about the health of the Murray River Peter is a member of the Mallee Catchment Management Authority's community-based Irrigation and Environment Implementation Committee and has had a key role in developing the Mallee Salinity and Water Quality Plan.

Natural Heritage Trust Coastcare Community Award

Winner: Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Group

The Flume at Warrnambool Beach was a wasteland before the 'reVeg the Flume' project began. This entire coastal strip has now been revegetated with indigenous flora and dune erosion has been arrested, demonstrating the power of efficient and well organised community action. The Warrnambool Coastcare/Landcare Group (WCLG) researched, planned, and implemented the project in collaboration with the Warrnambool Surfriider Foundation. Inactive two years ago, the WCLG group now has 60 financial members.

Alcoa Landcare Community Group Award

Winner: East Gippsland Landcare Network

This innovative network of Landcare Groups in East Gippsland was formed in 1996 to support groups tackling important land and water management issues from the Perry River near Stratford in the west to the New South Wales border in the east. The network has grown from 14 groups with one co-ordinator to 20 groups employing four full-time staff. Over 500 Landcare families are now involved in the activities of the network, covering almost 180,000 hectares of the region. The network's major role has been to develop and co-ordinate Landcare programs and encourage increased community participation in NRM activities.

Australian Government Landcare Regional Award

Winner: Port Phillip & Westernport Catchment Management Authority

At least 196 organisations helped create the 2004-2009 Port Phillip & Westernport CMA's Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). This practical consultation process has brought the government, water authorities, environmental organizations and industry groups of the area together. The keystone of the RCS is the Landcare Support Strategy (LSS), which was built from a survey of the needs of all known Landcare groups in the area. The LSS is designed to help all of the 'community Landcare' groups in the region, whether they are Landcare or one of hundreds of other local organisations. Through these strategies, the PPWCMA has successfully increased the capacity for community environment groups to do the work they were created to do. There are now more Landcare groups, more members, and groups consider themselves to be 'healthier' than they did four years ago.

Landcare Australia Local Government Landcare Community Partnerships Award

Winner: Melton Shire Council

The highly skilled and multi-disciplinary staff of this Council combine to deliver a range of services and expertise ranging from environmental education, land management, stormwater awareness, conservation planning and community engagement. A growing municipality of more than 76,000 people and lying just 35 minutes to the west of Melbourne, Melton Shire has a diverse demography and a wide range of environmental issues. The Council supports Landcare and helps reach the local community with its key messages and activities, encouraging participation in environmental projects by organising education days, tree-planting, water quality testing, tours, workshops and information displays.

Bushcare Nature Conservation Award

Winner: Yarriamback Vegetation Enhancement Project-Yarriambiack Landcare Network & Greening Australia

The Yarriamback Vegetation Enhancement Project started in 1986 to revegetate gaps between native habitat islands and to link local bushland remnants across the Wimmera Plains. Important remnant areas are being carefully managed to encourage proliferation of rare and threatened species, with great success over the past two years. The Yarriamback Landcare Network, in partnership with Greening Australia and a highly supportive local community have ensured the success of this project.

Rural Press Landcare Primary Producer Award

Winner: Bob and Anne Davie

Bob and Anne Davie started out as dairy farmers in 1954 with a plot of 120 acres at Ventnor on Phillip Island. Following the 1967-1968 drought, they moved into beef farming and purchased three more 80 acre lots. When the Phillip Island Landcare Group was formed in 1988 Bob and Anne became involved with the aim of reducing salinity and helping to lower the watertable. They aimed to revegetate their property and take advantage of group incentives for fencing and planting to do this. In total more than 26,000 indigenous plants have now been established on the property. Bob and Anne also work tirelessly for sustainability within the catchment, are heavily involved in the local Landcare Group and are recognised throughout the district as being truly inspirational farmers.

Highly Commended: Alan & Shelley Green, Bill, Faye, Brett & Jodie Loughbridge

Westpac Landcare Education Award

Winner: Whitfield District Primary School

Rehabilitating Jessie's Creek, which runs through the town of Whitfield, is the goal of Whitfield District Primary School students. Initiated in 2002, there are already remarkable improvements, with the project becoming a vehicle for developing the school's curriculum to fully integrate the eight key learning areas for students. With strong community interest and participation, students have benefited from hands-on environmental work through to improved public speaking and written communication skills. The efforts of this primary school have greatly improved the condition of the Creek and given students an enormous sense of pride and ownership of the project and the environment of their backyard.

Highly Commended: St. Francis of the Fields Primary School

Alcan Landcare Indigenous Community Award

Winner: Bangarang Community

Together with the local Landcare Group the Bangarang Community is actively involved in implementing the Warby Range Landcare program, This relationship has made a huge contribution to the community's understanding of the importance of respecting and protecting water, the land, the flora and fauna, as well as the need to provide local children with a legacy of skills and knowledge to inherit. The Banarang Community's efforts have also greatly contributed to social harmony in the area, with ongoing dialogue and an increased awareness of indigenous history and culture, and mutual respect for the needs of both current landholders, particularly farmers, and the Bangarang people.



<p align="center">Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award Winner: Dr. Stuart Boucher , Dept. of Primary Industries</p> <p>Dr. Stuart Boucher, a geomorphologist with the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, has studied the relationship between soil types and water movements, and developed a program for restoring land showing signs of tunnel erosion. Stuart chose the area around Costerfield in central Victoria, which was extensively cleared in the 1880s and where tunnel erosion is common, for the field study. The new techniques Stuart Boucher has developed are proving to be very successful in repairing what has been a very serious land degradation problem.</p>	<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award Goulburn Broken: Allan & Sheila Stute</p> <p>Neighbours recognise Allan and Sheila Stute’s property as a stand-out farm in the Sunday Creek district. The 140 hectare property in the hill country near Broadford is known for its meticulous management and successful combining of environmental and progressive farming practices. Many of these activities and improvements are in accordance with local catchment plans and the Stute’s property is held up as a sound model from both an economic and a Landcare perspective.</p>
<p align="center">Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship Winner: Don McKenzie</p> <p>In just seven years Don has planted 100,000 trees on his farm at Jeparit in the northern Wimmera (covering 15% of the total property). Every paddock is surrounded by 20-metre wide shelter-belts and hillsides have been protected with saltbush and wattles. In an area where wide treeless paddocks have been the norm, his farm is a green oasis. Don was a founding member of the Eastern Hindmarsh Landcare Group and helped to establish the Hindmarsh Landcare Network in 1997. An executive committee member ever since, he has contributed to the development of the Hindmarsh Salinity Control Program, considered one of the most successful partnerships within the Landcare Network.</p>	<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award North Central: David & Jacinta Jolly</p> <p>David and Jacinta Jolly have farmed Clover Park since 1977. They have since added to the original 134 hectares and now farm 795 hectares in the Lexton district. They have successfully increased productivity with 70% of the property’s mid slopes and alluvial flats now in perennial pasture as well as 20% of the hill country. The stocking rate and wool cut per hectare have both been significantly increased.</p>
<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award Glenelg Hopkins: Gerard & Colleen Briody</p> <p>Gerard and Colleen Briody’s property in the Lexton district is low lying and subject to waterlogging and dryland salinity. As a result the Briodys have concentrated their efforts on minimising and mitigating the effects of salinity, protecting water quality, and growing productive, sustainable grazing pastures. Dedicated Landcare members, Gerard and Colleen are making progressive improvements to their farm every year and contributing to the strength and success of the Lexton Landcare Group.</p>	<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award East Gippsland: Allan, Helen & Andrew Sheridan</p> <p>Allan, Helen and Andrew Sheridan bought Garoogong, a 650-hectare fine wool property at Bengworden, south-west of Bairnsdale in mid 2003 and immediately embarked on a large-scale farm planning and farm rehabilitation program. Already they have made remarkable improvements. In just two years, the Sheridans have implemented an array of significant sustainable farming activities and are in the process of applying a farm covenant through the Trust for Nature to the areas where environmental improvements have been made.</p>
<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award Wimmera: Alan & Shelley Green</p> <p>Alan and Shelley Green purchased their 480 hectare property at Great Western in 1984. The property was in very poor condition with vermin, salinity and erosion, but now has a stocking rate of 5.1 DSE per hectare and 23 paddocks of improved pasture. 13% of the property has been fenced out and revegetated. A steep hill project which saw them plant a woodlot on a denuded sheet eroded hill has seen excellent results. The revegetation works have helped improve the erosion and salinity problems on the property.</p>	<p align="center">Department of Primary Industries – Sustainable Farming Award West Gippsland: Rosemary & Fergus Irving</p> <p>Fergus and Rosemary Irving operate a 1464 hectare merino wool farm at Woodside. The farm consists of 52 hectares of remnant vegetation, eight hectares of pine plantation, 91 hectares of wetlands and around 30 hectares of fenced out creek frontage and revegetation works. The Irvings are local pioneers in the area of direct seeding. They have completed 32 hectares since 1982, with 20 kilometres of fencing. Their other Landcare projects include shelterbelts, fencing out of unstable sand hills, fencing and revegetation of two creeks, rabbit harbour reduction and fox and rabbit baiting programs.</p>

* Department of Primary Industries –Sustainable Farming Award *Port Phillip & Westernport* Please refer to the Rural Press Landcare Primary Producer Award information