

EMBARGOED UNTIL 4PM, Tuesday, 28 August 2007

LANDCARE AWARDS RECOGNISE VOLUNTEERS

Environment Minister Gavin Jennings today joined the Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser, A.C., to recognise the extraordinary efforts of Victoria's Landcare volunteers.

Mr Jennings said the 2007 Victorian Landcare Awards acknowledged the outstanding achievements of 107 landcarers nominated in 13 categories covering a range of environmental work in Victoria.

"From humble beginnings in Victoria more than two decades ago, Landcare has grown into an international, community-based movement with thousands of groups carrying out valuable environmental repair projects around the world," Mr Jennings said.

"The annual Victorian Landcare Awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the efforts of ordinary people who care for our environment.

"This year's winners include educational institutions, local government, nature and conservation groups, catchment management authorities, indigenous groups, as well as individual landcarers and community groups."

The Individual Landcare Award was presented to Lyn Coulston, a founding member of The Upper Murray Catchment Farm Tree Group, who has made an enormous contribution to the development of Landcare in the Upper Murray over the past 23 years.

"Lyn is known for generously sharing her time and knowledge with others and this award acknowledges her passion for educating her local community and helping them perform valuable environmental work," Mr Jennings said.

Other award winners included:

- the Murrayville Landcare Group, which rehabilitated degraded land and raised awareness of sustainable land management practices (Alcoa Landcare Community Group Award)
- the Hindmarsh Landcare Network, which helped to protect two endangered species of acacia and provided habitat for the endangered Bush Stone-curlew (Landcare Australian Nature Conservation Award).

Mr Jennings said he was proud of the Victorian Government's long history of direct support for Landcare projects.

"Over the past five years the Victorian Government has contributed more than \$27 million to Landcare programs in Victoria," he said.

"In 2007-08 alone, the Brumby Government is providing close to \$10 million for Landcare.

"This includes \$2 million over four years for a new Landcare Volunteer Recruitment Initiative aimed at supporting current Landcare groups to maintain and increase their memberships.

“A once-off injection of \$3.5 million will fund New Generation Landcare Grants for large-scale and integrated projects dealing with key issues of water quality and salinity.”

Mr Jennings said the Victorian Government’s financial support is more than matched by the efforts of committed volunteers supporting the Landcare movement for more than 20 years.

“The Brumby Government is proud to celebrate the contribution of grassroots volunteers who work in over 1000 groups around the state,” Mr Jennings said.

“Without these volunteers, there would be no Landcare.

“I commend the range of individuals, groups and businesses that contribute to the Landcare movement in Victoria.”

The winners of the National Award categories at the 2007 Victorian Landcare Awards will become the State’s representatives in the National Landcare Awards, announced in Canberra in August 2008.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment in conjunction with Landcare Australia Limited have funded and coordinated the 2007 Awards event, held at Government House. The complete list of winners of the 2007 Victorian Landcare Awards is:

Category	Winner
National Landcare Programme Individual Landcarer Award	Lyn Coulston
Murray-Darling Basin Commission Rivercare Award	Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek Inc.
Landcare Australia Nature Conservation Award	Hindmarsh Landcare Network
Alcoa Landcare Community Group Award	Murrayville Landcare Group
Leighton Holdings Local Government Landcare Partnerships Award	Hume City Council
Rural Press Landcare Primary Producer Award	Lindsay and Ian Humphry
Westpac Landcare Education Award	Camperdown College Environment Group
Alcan Landcare Indigenous Award	Gippsland - East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative
Australian Government Landcare NRM Region Award	West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
Australian Government Coastcare Award	Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee
Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship	Rae Talbot
Dr Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award	Dr Julianne Sargent
Sustainable Farming Award - Corangamite	Brian Wilson
Sustainable Farming Award - East Gippsland	Rick and Jenny Robertson
Sustainable Farming Award - Glenelg Hopkins	Barry and Judy Veale, Mark and Julie Veale
Sustainable Farming Award - Goulburn Broken	Tom Dumaresq
Sustainable Farming Award - Mallee	Ross Bennett
Sustainable Farming Award - North Central	Ken, Helen and Alistair Calder
Sustainable Farming Award - Northeast	Lindsay and Ian Humphry
Sustainable Farming Award - Port Phillip Westernport	Graham Simpson
Sustainable Farming Award - West Gippsland	Woodcote Pty Ltd
Sustainable Farming Award - Wimmera	Daryl and Brent Barber