



MEDIA RELEASE

National Landcare Awards and Conference celebrate outstanding Landcare champions

23 September: Twelve winning Landcare projects were announced last night at the National Landcare Awards in Melbourne, where nearly 600 Landcarers from across the country came together to celebrate impressive achievements in the Landcare community.

Last night's gala dinner saw award winners from diverse categories, including sustainable farm practices, Coastcare, young Landcare leader, and Indigenous land management. The prestigious Bob Hawke Landcare Award that comes with a \$50,000 prize was won by Queensland farmer Stephen Burgess, who runs a property combining sustainable agriculture, light grazing and a nature refuge.

Balingup's Southampton Homestead won the coveted People's Choice Award. The farm, run by Jeff Pow and Michelle McManus, came out on top among all 69 national finalists by receiving the most votes from the Australian public in an online poll in the lead-up to last night's award ceremony.

Jeff Pow was stunned to win this esteemed award. "When we started to farm this way, and do it from a values-based approach, on the first day we produced our first chickens we had an instant customer-base. People flocked to us, from social media, from word-of-mouth. That's the power of a community-based approach. We wanted to produce food in a way that did so much more for the environment and the people," Jeff said. "Humans have a role as creative agents to bring about change. That's our job in the ecosystem."

Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Luke Hartsuyker MP, was on hand to present the Australian Government sponsored Awards, while Victorian Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, presented the Coastcare Award.

The awards are part of the three-day biennial National Landcare Conference that was held in Victoria this year, honouring the state as the birthplace of the national Landcare movement 30 years ago.

The Conference kicked off on Wednesday with 11 field trips showcasing some of Victoria's best Landcare projects, including a visit to Main Ridge Dairy on the Mornington Peninsula, where 180 goats sit on 130 acres, and a visit to Kinglake to learn about fire recovery around the area.

Thursday saw ABC Gardening Australia's Costa Georgiadis take the stage as MC and ex-Governor General and National Soil Advocate, Major General the Hon. Michael Jeffery, addressing delegates with a speech entitled Save the Soil; Save the

Planet, where he called for collective action on soil health, saying that "the declining health of our soil should be seen as a responsibility for the whole population."

This project is supported by Landcare Australia, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and the Victorian Government.





Landcare Australia CEO, Tessa Jakszewicz, commended all who attended Australia’s premier sustainability and biodiversity event.

“This is the only time that the Landcare community congregates in one place and is able to learn about the latest innovations together and celebrate the many significant Landcare achievements since the last conference,” Tessa said. “The award winners represent the very best of the best in the Landcare community and we commend their hard work and passion for Landcaring,” she said.

All finalist case studies and photos by category are available at nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards.

The full list of all the winners of the 2016 National Landcare Awards and highlights are on the next page.

The National Landcare Awards are being delivered by Landcare Australia in partnership with the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme and the Victorian Government, and are sponsored by Fairfax Media, Indigenous Land Corporation, and ManpowerGroup Australia.

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For more information, please contact:

Trish O’Gorman
 Communications Manager
 Landcare Australia
 Tel: 02 8440 8809/0405 677 251
 Email: trish.ogorman@landcareaustralia.com.au

Manjari Fergusson
 Communications Executive
 Landcare Australia
 Tel: 02 8440 8807
 Email: manjari.fergusson@landcareaustralia.com.au

About Landcare Australia

Landcare Australia is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision of all Australians actively caring for the land and water that sustain us. For over 25 years, Landcare Australia has worked collaboratively with federal, state and local governments, corporate partners and sponsors, and individuals, to build capacity for the Landcare community to better manage Australia’s crucial land and water assets.

Landcare Australia delivers hundreds of projects annually through the volunteer efforts of local community groups, indigenous groups, and the more than 5,400 Landcare and Coastcare groups that make up the Landcare movement.

www.landcareaustralia.org.au

Full list of National Landcare Award winners

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| <p>Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award</p> | <p>Rhonda Williams, WA</p> | <p>Rhonda Williams sees Landcare and sustainable agriculture as being key to long term profitability and has hosted 20 field days and 30 trials on her farms.</p> |
| <p>Australian Government Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award</p> | <p>Southampton Homestead WA</p> | <p>Jeff Pow and Michelle McManus are part of a leading trend in farming, taking responsibility for the growing and the processing of all food on their farm Southampton Homestead, selling their produce directly to the community.</p> |

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| <p>Australian Government Landcare Facilitator or Coordinator Award</p> | <p>Jill Richardson, WA</p> | <p>Jill Richardson has spent 25 years dedicated to furthering Landcare in WA, leading significant on-ground environmental works and behavioural change in sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation.</p> |
| <p>Australian Government Partnerships with Landcare Award</p> | <p>Lake Macquarie Landcare NSW</p> | <p>Lake Macquarie Landcare is a community-based organisation built on the successful working partnership between passionate, dedicated and hardworking local volunteers and the Lake Macquarie City Council. It is the largest network of Landcare groups in NSW. Since 2001, Coolum District Coast Care Inc has consistently worked hard to galvanise energy and public interest in caring for the coastal environment on the Maroochy north shore of the Sunshine Coast and beyond.</p> |
| <p>Coastcare Award</p> | <p>Coolum and District Coastcare, QLD</p> | <p>The Blackwood Basin Group has been coordinating community-managed Landcare projects across the Blackwood Catchment for over two decades; working with 54 catchment groups, assisting over 500 farming families and delivering more than \$16million of Landcare activities throughout the iconic river basin.</p> |
| <p>Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award</p> | <p>Blackwood Basin Group WA</p> | <p>The Rangers have received a wide range of land and sea management training, and they combine these new skills and knowledge with their traditional Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, to manage and protect their unique area.</p> |
| <p>Indigenous Land Management Award</p> | <p>Crocodile Islands Rangers NT</p> | <p>The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre – Creative Catchment Kids program has grown over the past five years to include 60 Murray and Riverina schools. Its mission is to engage the region’s students and schools to develop more resilient landscapes and communities through a change in attitude toward natural resource management.</p> |
| <p>Junior Landcare Team Award</p> | <p>Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre, NSW</p> | <p>Naomi Edwards is an instigator of progressive change when it comes to addressing environmental issues and is passionate about intergenerational engagement in Landcare.</p> |
| <p>Manpower Young Landcare Leader Award</p> | <p>(tie) Naomi Edwards, QLD and Ella Maesepp, WA</p> | <p>Ella Maesepp has worked as a Landcare Officer in the Upper Blackwood area for 12 years, delivering millions of dollars’ worth of projects to protect biodiversity, manage salinity, increase agricultural sustainability and reduce individual carbon footprints.</p> |
| <p>People’s Choice Award</p> | <p>Southampton Homestead WA</p> | <p>Jeff Pow and Michelle McManus are part of a leading trend in farming, taking responsibility for the growing and the processing of all food on their farm Southampton Homestead, selling their produce directly to the community.</p> |
| <p>Bob Hawke Landcare Award</p> | <p>Stephen Burgess, QLD</p> | <p>Stephen Burgess has run Wurraglen Nature Refuge in Dagon, Queensland for nearly 20 years, developing the property which combines sustainable market farming and light grazing. Stephen’s blend of biological and organic farming principles combined with holistic management practices demonstrate every aspect of the Landcare ethic.</p> |

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