LANDCARE TASMANIA INC
OPENING OF THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY LANDCARE GATHERING 2026
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WELLS
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DELORAINE, SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2026

Good morning, and it's a real delight to be here for the Tasmanian Community Landcare Gathering in stunning Deloraine.

We were here only last weekend, visiting the stalls and the fabulous work on show at the Craft Fair, and I can tell you Deloraine was very busy. This town clearly knows how to bring people together. This weekend, it's your turn.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Palawa people as the First Peoples of lutruwita/Tasmania and the Traditional Custodians of this land. I'm grateful for their care of this beautiful island over countless generations.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal people with us today. Your ongoing contribution to our community is deeply valued.

Thirty years ago, Deloraine hosted the very first statewide Landcare gathering. Think about that. A few people got together, swapped ideas, and went home with a little more energy than they arrived with. Thirty years later, here you are again. And what a movement has grown from those first conversations.

Today, more than three hundred member groups care for our land and coasts, our waterways and wildlife. Behind them are thousands of volunteers, people who give their time, their knowledge and their own resources, because they love this place and want to leave it better than they found it.

One of the great privileges of being Governor is the opportunity to champion Tasmania and Tasmanians. And when I think about what makes our State so special, it is not just our extraordinary landscapes, but the people who care for them. Landcare brings those two things together beautifully. Across Tasmania, you are making a difference, often quietly and without recognition, protecting the places we treasure and strengthening the communities around them. That is something worth celebrating, and it is a real privilege to be here today to recognise your contribution.

And when we talk about the difference Landcare makes, it often comes down to the simplest of actions. It's not a grand idea. It's neighbours, friends and strangers who turn up on a cold Saturday morning, pull on gloves, and put another tree guard in the ground. Most of those plantings won't be finished in a single season, or even in a single lifetime. That's an act of real faith in the future, and I thank you for it.

And Landcare gives back. The research tells us that people who take part in these types of activities enjoy better mental and physical health. I'm not at all surprised. When you care for the land, you also end up caring for each other. The impact of being out on Country, having conversations with people of all ages cannot be underestimated. The friendships we build, the work we share and the sense of belonging to something bigger than ourselves are among the most valuable things Landcare gives us.

I'm also glad that so many of you are working alongside Tasmanian Aboriginal people, learning from their deep knowledge of lutruwita and their long custodianship of Country. That is a gift to all of us, and it makes our care for this island wiser.

Now, this Gathering has really been shaped by what you told Landcare Tasmania you wanted – practical sessions, real experiences, and plenty of time to connect and talk with one another.

It's about sharing what's working, what hasn't worked so well, and what we're all curious to learn more about.

When I was looking through the program in preparation for coming along today, I was genuinely amazed by the breadth and depth of what's on offer. There really is something for everyone, across the three program streams. These streams cover so much of what Landcare is all about — building strong and resilient communities, looking after our catchments and supporting healthy farming systems, and protecting and restoring the biodiversity of our landscapes.

There's a fantastic range of knowledge and experience that comes together for this Gathering and I hope you get the chance to explore some sessions outside your usual areas of interest, share ideas and learn from each other. And of course, it's not all work! This evening we have a chance to come together and celebrate, and tomorrow you'll get out on Country, with Landcare communities hosting you in the field. I think that's a particularly special part of the Gathering — getting to see the work happening on the ground and hearing directly from the people making it happen.

Can I encourage you to use these three days well? Sit next to someone you haven't met. Ask the person from the other side of the State how they tackled the problem you're facing. Tell your own story, too, because the work you do every day is something others can learn from.

My thanks to everyone who made this weekend possible — events like these do not just miraculously happen. So, to the staff, the Board and everyone involved. Thank you.

To every Landcarer in this room: thank you. You are the best of what a community can be. I hope you leave this weekend feeling inspired, connected, and proud of what you do.

It gives me great pleasure to declare the Tasmanian Community Landcare Gathering 2026 open. Wishing you an impactful and fun weekend. Enjoy every minute.