

# Media release

15 December 2014

## Man found guilty of hunting threatened Freckled Duck

A 68-year-old Sorrento man was found guilty of hunting a Freckled Duck, a threatened species, in the Horsham County Court on 8 December, 2014.

The man was fined \$1000, and ordered to pay costs of \$5000.

The case was initially heard in the Horsham Magistrates Court on 18 October, 2013, where the man was found guilty of hunting the Freckled Duck, and pleaded guilty to possessing and using toxic lead shot.

The man appealed against the findings; however they were upheld by the County Court on 8 December 2014.

The man shot at the Freckled Duck at about 7.30am on March 17 at Lake Natimuk on the opening weekend of the 2013 Victorian duck hunting season.

He was observed by authorised officers shooting at the duck, and subsequently interviewed, and his firearm and ammunition seized.

Tests on his ammunition showed the man was using lead shot – prohibited for duck hunting.

Game Management Authority Chief Executive Officer Greg Hyams said hunters must clearly identify their target before shooting.

“The illegal shooting of threatened species can put pressure on populations. Hunters must be sure of their target before they pull the trigger, and if you are not sure, don’t shoot”, Mr Hyams said.

Mr Hyams said of equal concern was the man’s use of lead shot.

“Lead shot has been prohibited for use in all duck hunting since 2002. Affordable non-toxic alternatives are readily available and there is no reason for any hunter to use lead shot in contravention of the regulations.”

“Hunters are a generally law-abiding group, but there are some who choose to do the wrong thing.”

“The Game Management Authority is working closely with hunting organisations and industry to maintain the highest standards of behavior in the field through the *Respect: Hunt Responsibly* initiative”.

Mr Hyams encourages all hunters to report any illegal hunting to the authorities by calling 136 186.

“Illegal hunting damages the reputation of hunting and can put people and wildlife at risk.”

“I strongly encourage hunters and the broader public to report any suspected illegal activity they see to ensure hunting is conducted safely and responsibly.”

For more information on game hunting in Victoria, visit [www.gma.vic.gov.au](http://www.gma.vic.gov.au)

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