

Media release

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Unlawful and unethical duck hunting will not be tolerated

The Game Management Authority (GMA) is warning duck hunters of the severe penalties they could face if caught breaking the law.

GMA Chief Executive Officer Greg Hyams said the warning comes after hunters present at First Marsh near Kerang fired early, failed to correctly identify their target, and failed to pick up spent cartridges during the opening weekend of duck hunting season.

“Birds were left in the water, including significant numbers of protected species such as threatened Freckled and Blue-billed Ducks.”

“Several hunters also commenced shooting up to half an hour before the season opened.”

In addition to illegal behaviour, Mr Hyams said many hunters were behaving unethically or irresponsibly.

“Hunters have been taking excessively long shots well outside of their shooting skills distance, resulting in wounding and lost birds. Some made no attempt to recover downed birds and kept shooting.”

“This sort of behaviour is illegal or unethical. It can put people and wildlife at risk and damages the reputation of others hunting responsibly.”

“There is no excuse for not knowing the law, or for hunting in unethical, unsustainable and inhumane ways.”

Mr Hyams said there are heavy penalties for failing to comply with the state’s hunting laws.

“Hunters are a generally law-abiding group, but unfortunately there is a growing number who choose to do the wrong thing,” Mr Hyams said.

“For those hunters who choose to break the law, penalties could include significant fines, forfeiture of equipment used in the commission of an offence, loss of Game and Firearms Licences, convictions and serious offences can even result in jail terms.”

“The Game Management Authority works closely with hunting organisations and industry to maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the field through the Respect: Hunt Responsibly program.”

“Hunters should not tolerate the illegal actions of the irresponsible few and I urge all responsible hunters to work with the GMA to stamp out illegal and unethical behaviour.”

The GMA strongly encourages hunters and the broader public to report any suspected illegal hunting activity to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000, the Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or via the GMA website at www.gma.vic.gov.au

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