

Media release

Friday 11 July 2014

GMA targets illegal hunting in Bunyip State Park

A 28-year-old Pakenham man will be charged on summons for carrying a weapon in a state park following a compliance operation by the newly formed Game Management Authority (GMA).

The GMA undertook the operation in conjunction with Parks Victoria and Victoria Police earlier this month in the Bunyip State Park, south east of Melbourne, in response to complaints from landowners and hunters about illegal deer hunting using spotlights.

Authorized officers found the Pakenham man in possession of a compound bow in the park.

The bow was seized and the man will be charged on summons to attend court.

It is an offence to be in possession of a firearm or other weapon in a national or state park except where permitted.

Officers also found an 18-year-old Bunyip man driving a motor vehicle in an area closed to vehicles. He will receive a \$295 penalty notice.

GMA Senior Game Officer Glenn Kilburn said the authority would continue to target spotlighting and other offences.

“The illegal hunting of deer at night from a vehicle creates significant public safety issues and is prohibited,” Mr Kilburn said. “Shooting from public roads is particularly dangerous.”

Mr Kilburn said hunters found hunting deer at night faced serious charges under the *Firearms Act 1996*, the *National Parks Act 1975* and the *Wildlife Act 1975*.

“These charges are likely to result in court appearances, substantial fines, forfeiture of firearms and equipment and cancellation of Game and/or Firearm Licences”, he said.

With some exceptions, hunting in parks managed under the *National Parks Act 1975* is not permitted and offenders may be fined up to \$2,952 if they are caught doing so.

The GMA, with help from Victoria Police, will continue to conduct patrols, road blocks and planned operations targeting illegal hunting and spotlighting in the northeast and Gippsland.

“Victoria has exceptional deer hunting opportunities for legitimate hunters and there is no need for people to use illegal methods to take deer,” Mr Kilburn said.

The GMA is the independent regulator of recreational game hunting in Victoria and is responsible for licensing, enforcement, education and research into game management.

For more information on the GMA and on Victoria’s hunting laws, go to www.gma.vic.gov.au

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