

Media release

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New report shows hunters taking record number of deer

The new 2014 - 2015 deer harvest report has revealed that the number of deer taken by licensed deer hunters is on the rise in Victoria.

Produced by the Game Management Authority (GMA) in collaboration with the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, the deer harvest report provides key data based on telephone surveys of licenced deer hunters.

In each survey, over 1,200 Victorian deer hunters were asked a series of questions related to their hunting activity, such as how many deer they harvested, what hunting methods they had used, where they hunted, the number of days they hunted, and the species of deer harvested.

GMA Chief Executive Officer Greg Hyams said the report found deer harvest numbers over the past two years were the largest recorded under the present survey method, which began in 2009.

"Surveys showed each licensed deer hunter hunted on approximately 6.7 days in 2014 and 6.8 days in 2015, with an average season harvest of 2.2 and 2.4 deer respectively," Mr Hyams said.

"The most commonly harvested species was Sambar Deer with an estimated total harvest of 51,390 in 2014 and 55,094 in 2015. The next most harvested deer was Fallow, with an estimated 7,870 in 2014 and almost double that (14,488) harvested in 2015. In total, an estimated 62,165 deer of all species were harvested in 2014 increasing to 71,142 in 2015."

"Stalking is the most preferred hunting method used, accounting for the majority of the harvest, with scent-trailing hounds being the most productive technique in both years," Mr Hyams said.

"The Goulburn Broken and East Gippsland regions had the highest numbers of deer harvested during 2014-15 with areas such as Mansfield, Myrtleford, Dargo, Bairnsdale, Licola and Jamieson having the highest number of people taking part in deer hunting."

Mr Hyams said the increasing harvest is likely due to the increasing distribution and abundance of deer, and the greater number of deer hunters in Victoria.

"Of the 50,000 hunters now registered, 34,321 are licenced to hunt deer with more than 2,000 Victorians signing up to hunt the six introduced deer species since 1 July this year alone," he said.

"We recognise that deer do have an impact on the environment and the data obtained from this report helps to inform both management and policy decisions regarding game deer species and deer hunting in Victoria."

Recreational hunters contribute approximately \$439 million per year to the Victorian economy and much of that (\$142.1 million) is generated by deer hunters.

For more information on game hunting in Victoria, visit www.gma.vic.gov.au

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