

Media release

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Wetlands closed for the start of the 2015 duck season

Four wetlands will be closed to duck hunting this season to protect significant numbers of threatened species, provide refuge for Brolga or to reinforce their status as off limits to hunting.

Game Management Authority (GMA) Chief Executive Officer Greg Hyams said Round Lake, will be closed to duck hunting as annual monitoring revealed the presence of threatened species.

“Round Lake at Lake Boga will be closed to duck hunting as surveys conducted by the GMA and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning detected the presence of significant numbers of threatened Blue-billed Ducks and Freckled Ducks,” Mr Hyams said.

Mr Hyams said Krause Swamp east of Hamilton will also be closed this season to provide refuge to Brolga as the dry conditions have limited habitat in the south west of the state.

“Wetlands are not normally closed due to the presence of Brolga as they largely avoid areas when there is hunting and they are not mistaken for game ducks,” Mr Hyams said.

“However, with the dry conditions in the south west, it was considered appropriate to provide refuge to a group of 47 Brolga in the area where they would not be disturbed by hunting.”

Mr Hyams said that Kow Swamp, east of Kerang, and Reedy Lakes, north of Kerang, will also be closed to reinforce their status as wildlife sanctuaries where hunting is prohibited.

“Closing wetlands during duck season is a routine safeguard that ensures threatened species are not put at risk,” Mr Hyams said.

“By surveying bird numbers and closing wetlands where appropriate, we are making sure that rare and threatened species are protected while still enabling duck hunters to participate in their recreation.”

“It is possible other wetlands will be closed this season and hunters should ensure they are aware of these before hunting by checking the GMA website or calling 136 186.”

“The Game Management Authority will monitor Round Lake during the season and if the threatened species move to another location, it will be recommended to be re-opened to hunting.”

Field and Game Australia and the Sporting Shooters’ Association of Australia support the closures.

The 2015 duck hunting season will open on Saturday 21 March at 7.10am in the eastern zone, 7.20am in the central zone and 7.30am in the western zone, and close half an hour after sunset on Monday 8 June.

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