

FACT SHEET

No hunting of Blue-winged Shoveler

Blue-winged Shoveler (*Spatula rhynchotis*) cannot be hunted during the 2024 duck season.

In 2021, the species was listed as threatened under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. The information below will remind you of the key distinguishing features to look out for in the Blue-winged Shoveler.

Importantly, if you are NOT SURE, DON'T SHOOT. The penalties for illegally shooting protected species could include a substantial fine, imprisonment or both.

Appearance

The Blue-winged Shoveler is a distinctive species with a slender build and broad, blue-grey bill. Male and female Shovelers have different plumage, with the male being more colourful than the female.



Male

Female



Female

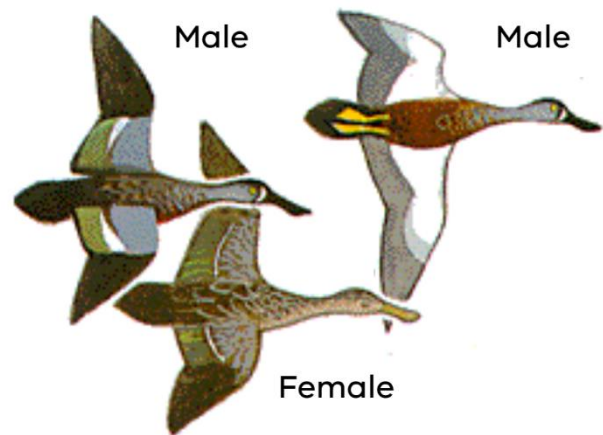
Male

When in breeding condition, the male has a shiny blue-green head, white face crescent in front of a yellow eye, black back, blue patch on the upperwing, a distinct white patch on the rump and deep chestnut-coloured flanks and belly. Outside the breeding season, this colouring fades and becomes dull. The male also has bright yellow/orange legs and is the only native duck to do so.

The female Shoveler lacks the bright colouring of the male and is predominantly brown with a fawn-coloured belly. Females also have the blue patch on the upperwing. They also have yellow/orange legs which may be more drab in colour than the males. Immature birds resemble females.

In flight

The Blue-winged Shoveler flies quickly, erratically



Male

Male

Female

and often in tight formation when flying in a flock. It has very quick wing beats with a distinctive whirring sound. In good light, the upper wing patch is obvious in both males and females and is fringed with white. Beneath the wing, the front feathers are white and clearly contrast with its darker rear feathers and belly.

The Blue-winged Shoveler has a distinct profile with a relatively short tail and long bill and head, which gives it a front heavy appearance. At relatively close range, you can clearly see the distinctive wedge-shaped bill of the Shoveler.

On the water

On the water, the Blue-winged Shoveler is a medium-sized duck which floats low. The large shovel-shaped bill, which gives the bird its name, finishes flush with the top of its head making it wedge-shaped in appearance. The male also has a white patch

Male

Female



Habitat and distribution

The Blue-winged Shoveler is an uncommon duck which is distributed throughout south-eastern and south-western Australia.

Shovelers prefer permanent, well-vegetated freshwater or saline wetlands with areas of open water and are usually found in inland cumbungi swamps and coastal tea-tree swamps.

Blue-winged Shovelers are seldom heard but do have a soft chatter when flying.

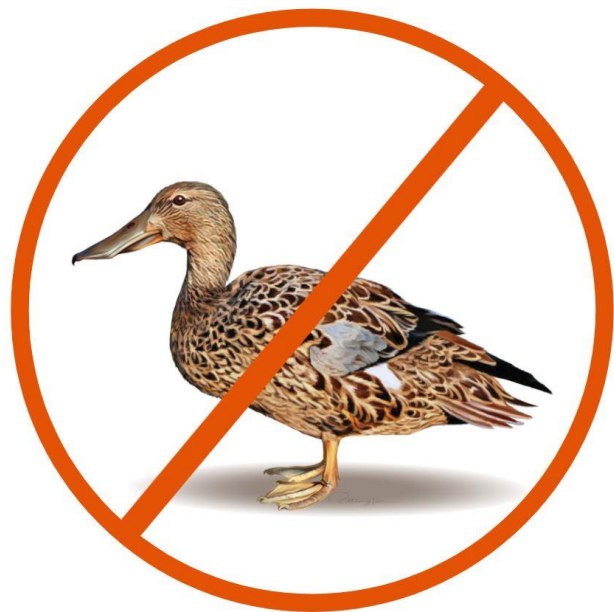
To see high definition video footage of the Blue-winged Shoveler and other waterfowl species, visit the GMA website and go to the Education section to find the DuckWISE education videos (www.gma.vic.gov.au/education/duck-hunting-education/duck-wise-education-video)

Tips for identifying Hardhead

- Quick and erratic flight
- Large shovel-shaped bill
- Blue patch on upper wing
- White underwing
- Yellow/orange legs
- Male has a yellow eye
- Found in well vegetated freshwater or saline swamp.



Male



Female

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