

From: [REDACTED]
To: ramsar
Subject: End duck shooting in Victoria
Date: Tuesday, 26 November 2019 4:41:35 PM

Dear Committee Members

Victoria is blessed with special and diverse wetlands, home to so many different plants, birds, fish and other species. Until recently I lived across the road from the Diggings Heritage Park which was populated with numerous water birds. Before then I lived across from the Monster Meeting site which was also full of birds and wildlife. I realise hunting cannot take place here, but I can see how desperately reliant the birdlife is on the meagre water resources in this area.

I'm pleased to see this inquiry underway and wanted to take the opportunity it presents to raise with the committee my strong opposition to duck shooting.

No inquiry into Victoria's wetlands can be complete without understanding that the decline of wetlands combined with the hunting season has brought our native duck populations to the brink.

I'm very upset and distressed that in 2019, duck shooting continues in Victoria when it has been banned in WA, NSW and Queensland, and was never permitted in the ACT.

The shooting of native birds for fun is simply not okay. Up to one quarter of birds that are shot fly away wounded, and will go on to either suffer painful deaths or survive with enduring injuries including shotgun pellets embedded in their bodies. I've seen many other native bird species killed or wounded - even magpies. All native birds are facing imminent extinction according to Geoffrey Maslen in *An Uncertain Future*. It is utterly mystifying why hunting is allowed to continue.

Across Victoria, Australia and the world, there is growing evidence that our ecosystems are in real trouble and the water bird populations are particularly susceptible to drought, climate change and other threats. These factors make it even more inappropriate for recreational killing of water birds.

On top of this, each 'season' I am confronted by video evidence showing the cruel practices of some hunters and inadequate monitoring by compliance staff.

I hope this inquiry will seriously consider an end to duck shooting in Victoria, and will also provide recommendations for Government actions to restore and protect the wetland habitats all our water birds depend on.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Lawrence

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