

Ducks to the slaughter

South Australia birds set to suffer as inhumane and cruel duck hunting season opens

Native birdlife on South Australian waterways won't be shown much love this Valentine's Day when the 2015 duck hunting season begins.

"From dawn tomorrow morning, ducks will be left to die, maimed and in pain," said Dr Dianne Evans, RSPCA South Australia Animal Welfare Advocate.

RSPCA South Australia's position is there can be no justification for killing and injuring ducks purely for 'sport.'

"We know the shotgun cartridges used in duck hunting create a spray of pellets which can miss vital organs. This leaves wounded birds suffering.

"It's impossible to establish exactly how many ducks are killed instantly compared to those who are left maimed. Only a very small percentage of hunters are submitting completed survey forms," Dr Evans said.

"Why does Ian Hunter, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, and Conservation, continue to sanction this cruel and archaic activity?

"Why does Minister Hunter allow the South Australian duck hunting season to run nearly two months longer than the Victorian season?" Dr Evans said.

Victoria's 12 week season does not start until March 21 and closes on June 8. South Australia's season opens tomorrow (February 14) and closes on June 28.

Around 10 per cent of the state's duck and quail hunting licences are issued to people outside of South Australia, mainly to Victorians.

"We want to see duck hunting banned in South Australia," Dr Evans said.

“It’s been 25 years since the West Australian Government put animal welfare first by banning duck hunting. South Australia remains trapped in the eighties.”

Banning duck and quail hunting could be done easily through the inclusion of a new regulation under the South Australian *Animal Welfare Act*.

“It’s time South Australia got with the times. Our ducks deserve it.

“I urge anybody who feels that duck hunting is inhumane and unjustifiable on welfare grounds, to contact their local member of state parliament and make their voices heard,” Dr Evans said.

For more information on duck hunting, visit <http://www.rspcasa.org.au/how-to-help/supportourcampaigns/duckhunting/>

The South Australian quail hunting season opens on April 4.

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