

No end in sight for duck cruelty

South Australian birds set to suffer with another hunting season announced

Christmas is traditionally a time for peace and goodwill, but the weekend announcement from the State Government that duck hunting will continue in 2016 is not a gift of kindness.

“Saturday’s announcement by Minister Hunter of the 2016 Open Hunting Season, means inevitable and unnecessary suffering of our native ducks, who will be left to die, maimed and in pain,” said Dr Di Evans, Animal Welfare Advocate, RSPCA South Australia.

“It is impossible for shooters to kill every duck outright with a shotgun as the spray of pellets can miss vital organs leaving wounded birds unable to eat or escape predators, to slowly die from starvation or infection.”

The hunting lobby acknowledges that not all ducks will be killed instantly but this obviously is of no consequence as they continue to demand an annual open season.

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

“It appears the 2016 season has been reduced from five months to four months, starting in March, and the daily bag limit has halved from 10 to five,” Dr Evans said.

“These restrictions have been implemented to minimise adverse ecological effect, but do nothing to prevent the cruel and extreme suffering of individual birds shot.

“With only a small number of active hunters, it seems ludicrous that duck hunting should be allowed to remain at all.”

Shooters are well aware that a number of ducks they shoot will die a slow painful death and yet they continue to inflict this unnecessary suffering.

Banning duck and quail hunting could be done easily through the inclusion of a new regulation under the South Australian *Animal Welfare Act 1985*.

“Western Australia banned the ‘sport’ in 1990 - there is no reason why South Australia can’t do the same,” Dr Evans said.

“I urge anybody who feels that duck hunting is inhumane and unjustifiable on welfare grounds, advocate for legislation change by contacting their local member of state parliament and make their voices heard.”

For more information on duck hunting, visit <http://www.rspcasa.org.au/issues/duck-hunting/>

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