

South Gippsland Sentinel Times
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Numerous organisations throughout Gippsland have joined an alliance calling for a ban on duck shooting. *Photo: Anchor Lee on Unsplash*

Duck shoot ban gains Gippsland support

AN alliance of over 60 First Nations Clans, business, union, animal welfare and environment groups publicly calling for a bird shoot ban earlier this year, has gained momentum.

In a matter of months, the number of organisations signing up to the cause has skyrocketed to 91, including South Gippsland Conservation Society, Wildseed Nursery Gippsland, Venus Bay Eco Retreat and Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club.

A group letter was sent to the Premier and Ministers for Environment and Agriculture, copied to many MPs in September.

It referenced the Labor Party's 2019 vote to review its policy on recreational duck shooting, a pastime which is already banned in NSW, ACT, WA and QLD, citing reasons of animal welfare, biodiversity, safety and economics.

No response was received as of last week.

According to the release, in 2020, a government report showed duck shooters' spending had fallen 46% across the state

since 2013.

In Gippsland it fell more sharply.

East Gippsland and Wellington fell 58%, Baw Baw 73% and Latrobe 72%.

Bass Coast and South Gippsland fell off the list of mentions.

The number of licensed duck shooters across the state is less than half of one percent of the population (Game Management Authority data), a percentage which is declining each year.

However pre-COVID, the number of domestic and international tourists who engaged in birdwatching was over 1.4M, with a spend of over \$2.8 Billion (Tourism Research Australia Visitor Surveys).

Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting inc (RVOTDS) the lead group behind the letter says regional Victoria is blessed with waterbird species unique to Australia.

A draft advertisement of the letter and signatories has been posted on the RVOTDS website.