

ADVERTISING FEATURE - Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting inc

A Better Way for Our Waterways: It's about safety. Conservation. And a better financial future.

Government data shows less than half of one percent of the population partake in recreational native bird hunting. So why are they permitted to do so, in so many tens of thousands of public waterways that authorities can't estimate the number, let alone monitor them?

The risks to our wildlife, and the public, are unacceptable. And the impact to tourism in rural areas which need it most, is heartbreaking.

Australian Wildlife Society is extremely concerned with the impact of recreational hunting to not only the native birds being hunted, but the protected species caught in the crossfire.

Our fragile ecosystems are struggling enough with climate change.

Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting inc (RVOTDS) shares that concern. It's about what we're leaving to our grandchildren.

And as a voice for Victorians who are socially and economically disadvantaged by native bird hunting, we know there's a better way.

Tourism has contributed more to



Australia's economy than agriculture, forestry and fishing combined. The National Tourism Satellite Account 22/23, shows total tourism consumption grew 72% to \$164.5 billion and employed 626,400 people. In Victoria, the two regions going for gold are Philip Island and the

Spa Country, but Victoria can offer so much more.

In the first year data was collected (2019), visitors who birdwatched in our country spent a whopping \$3 billion. (Combined spend of international, domestic day and domestic overnight visitors)

From a domestic overnight perspective 1, birdwatching spend grew 70% in just the two years

to March 2024, to almost \$400 million. Visits to a health spa were on par with that, while visits to farm gates fell 34% in a year, to \$255 million.

Meanwhile, according to ATO data, the 10 lowest income earning postcodes 2 in Victoria included Loddon's 3567, Campaspe's 3583, and Gannawarra/Buloke's 3542.

The tragedy is these areas are blessed with native birdlife unique to our country. 3542 contains hidden treasures, namely lake Bael Bael and Koorangie Wildlife Reserve, home to Australia's rarest native duck the Freckled Duck. And 3583 sits between the beautiful Lake

Boga, and Lake Tutchewop, often blessed with our quirky unique threatened species the Blue-billed duck. Who knew, besides hunters?

Independent studies show that most tourists avoid hunting areas.

It's time to ban guns at our waterways.

Victoria's public waterways should be safe havens for people and wildlife

HUNTING & TOURISM DO NOT MIX

