

# Ducks not breeding despite wet years

PERHAPS Lucas Cooke of Field and Game should check with scientists before attempting to speak on

their behalf (Letters to the Editor, *Sunraysia Daily*, January 20).

The East Australian Aerial Waterbird Survey (EAAWS), managed by Professor Kingsford of the University of NSW, is the largest wildlife survey in Australia and the only long-term scientifically robust data we have to monitor real trends in water birds.

The 40th Annual EAAWS just completed reported unambiguously that game duck populations continue to be well below long-term average, in many cases “by order of magnitude”(point 14, page 3, of the summary report).

Some species – such as the pink-eared duck, hardhead and grey teal – declined even further from last year’s survey, which in turn saw a massive 58 per cent decline in game ducks

from the year before.

Two “game” duck species are now on the threatened species list.

The latest survey also reported that despite two consecutive La Ninas, ducks are not breeding.

Professor Kingsford’s latest survey in 2022 shows duck numbers are lower now than they were in 2015, despite all the rain we’ve had.

Yet Mr Cooke wants a full-blown recreational bird shoot – extremely alarming coming from a member of a group that obtains hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars in grants for its “conservation” efforts.

There are plenty of other genuine conservation groups that care for our native fauna and wetlands all year without needing to blast it up with shotguns for fun.

The science shows our native waterbirds – many species unique to our country – are in serious trouble.

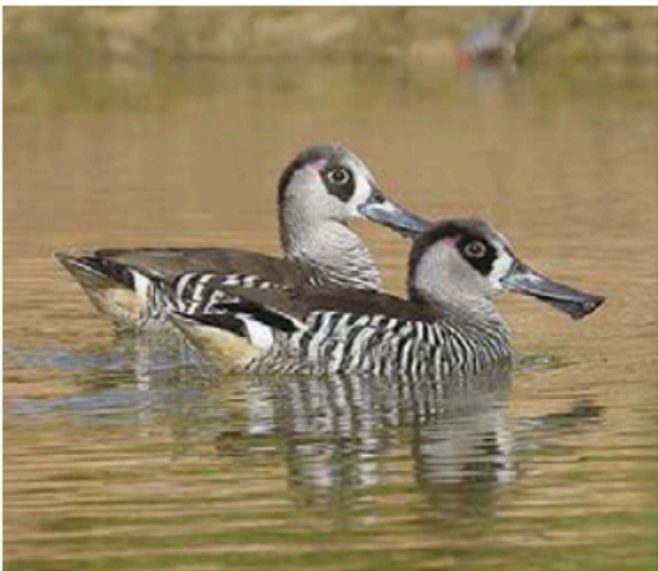
True conservationists want to protect them.

Recreational duck shooting is

banned in NSW, Queensland, the ACT and Western Australia.

In Victoria less than half of one per cent of the population shoots ducks, while ongoing polls continue to show most Victorians – particularly regional – want the pastime to end.

**Fiona Byrnes,**  
Regional Victorians Opposed  
to Duck Shooting



The pink-eared duck are in decline.