

To whom it may concern,

### Introduction

I am an ecologist and science communicator who has lived [REDACTED] in the Wombat Forest for 19 years. I have worked in various roles in the natural resource management sector – including for State and local government and more recently not for profit organisations including Connecting Country, BirdLife Australia. I am currently marketing and partnerships coordinator at a native seed bank at Creswick– Seeding Victoria.

I have been president of the BirdLife Ballarat group, founding member of BirdLife Castlemaine committee, member of the Australasian Bat Society since 1998 and over the years have volunteered for Hepburn Wildlife Shelter and Macedon Ranges Wildlife Rescue.

For nine years I published a column in the local paper the Hepburn Advocate, called Hepburn Nature Diary, on seasonal nature happenings and on encounters with common wildlife, as well as this column I have written for Australian Wildlife Secrets magazine on wildlife management issues such as bats in houses and wildlife friendly fencing.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

### Key points

Please remove the outdated notion that exotic deer are a protected species, and please update your terms around ‘protected’ and ‘threatened’. Deer numbers are increasing exponentially here in the Wombat Forest and I can see the damage they cause to young trees, shrubs and other vital habitat. The Wildlife Act should be updated to cover native wildlife – not exotic species.

Please stop removing native species from the ‘protected’ wildlife list – especially native duck and quail for sport shooting. Sport shooting is barbaric and unnecessary and should not be permitted under the Wildlife Act.

Please update the Authority to Control Wildlife permit system to be transparent, outline whether lethal or non-lethal control methods, and simply make it much harder for permits allowed. Ian Temby’s book **Wild Neighbours – the human approach to living with wildlife** outlines these very useful methods. These should be tried first – and lethal control considered last. “Disturbingly, permits to “control” threatened wildlife (such as the Brolga, Grey-headed Flying Fox, Hardhead, Magpie Goose, Broad-shelled Turtle and the Murray River Turtle) have also been granted” VNPA fact sheet. Please make sure NO permits given to control threatened species!

In this region we see horrific examples of cruelty – a Peregrine Falcon was shot and had to be euthanized in Romsey, kangaroos in the Macedon region shot by bow and arrow, the wombat severed heads at Firth Park – we need the Act to appropriately punish and deter wildlife crime. Please increase the penalties and prosecutions, and make it easier for people to report wildlife crime.

Please consider the deleterious effects of logging, prescribed burning, road building on wildlife habitat and individuals – these activities should not trigger exemptions from the Act.

The phasing out of opera traps and inappropriate fruit netting is an absolute win for platypus, water rats and flying foxes. Thank you to the Victorian Government for these two decisions! Now – please ban the use of sticky glue traps – these traps catch and kill native microbats, skinks and young snakes, and are cruel to both indigenous and non-indigenous wildlife.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment!

Tanya

