

## Wildlife Act Review

### Submission Comment 256:

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#### Primary interests:

- Protection and conservation of wildlife and habitat Wildlife welfare
- Wildlife welfare
- Rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife

#### Comment

The Wildlife Act should, as it's name implies, be a comprehensive Act to protect Victoria's wildlife. That protection should occur with the benefits for the fauna and flora first and foremost. The Act is currently written with protection of wildlife only as if it is a natural resource to be exploited by humans. Wildlife existed in Victoria before Victoria existed, long before humans came to this land including our First Nations peoples. Respecting this fact leads us to create a Wildlife Act that is for the best interests of that wildlife, not something that selfishly is written for our own ultimate gain. The fact that the Wildlife Act allows specific activities, such as hunting of native wildlife, is an obscenity, and although it is outside the scope of this review it is clear that the overwhelming majority of Victorians want activities like recreational duck shooting banned immediately. This is made worse by the sections of the Act that exempt a person from the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act if they are hunting animals. They create the exact harm that POCTA was designed to prevent and yet they are given explicit permission to carry on - either an act is cruelty or it isn't, giving an exemption to a charge arising under POCTA only means that the Wildlife Act authorises a certain form of cruelty for some people. It does not make the action less cruel. Duck shooting should be banned outright immediately. It has no place in the Wildlife Act which needs to be written for the benefit of wildlife that faces threats from human expansion and development, climate change, hunting and exploitation. We have created all these pressures on our wildlife, we have done all this damage to so many species, pushing some to extinction and more to the brink. It becomes a moral obligation to protect that which remains.

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