

Wildlife Act Review

Submission Comment 314:

Contributor: Individual

Primary interests:

- Protection and conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Wildlife welfare
- Offences and penalties relating to wildlife

Comment

I am appalled by the ineffectual penalties which relate to the harm and destruction of wildlife on private property under the Act. A recent example was the poisoning of upwards of 130 wedge-tailed eagles on private property for which the perpetrators received very light penalties. I believe changes to the Act and its implementation are imperative to protect our precious native species from this appalling destruction. To this end, the Act should include the establishment of an independent regulator with the role of enforcing the Wildlife Act with stronger penalties which serve as a deterrent to potential offenders. The Act should also ban the use of 1080 poison bait for feral animals that can spread in our waterways and through the food chain, destroying wildlife. The use of deadly rodenticides should likewise be prohibited due to their lethal impact on species such as owls that consume poisoned prey. The Act, as it stands, has conflicting purposes. The principle goal should be the protection, maintenance and care of Victorian native wildlife and habitat. At present, the Act includes some game but I believe this should be revised so that the management of game comes under a separate Act which is only applicable to introduced and feral species. Legislation around game ought not to jeopardise the protection of our native species. Several species of Victorian wildlife are currently facing bleak futures because their habitat has not been given genuine protection under the law. There is no question that logging of our native forests robs our wildlife of their habitat, threatening their long-term survival. For this reason, it is my view that native forest logging in Victoria should cease at once.

I am deeply concerned that hunters are still permitted to injure and kill native ducks. There are two issues here: animal welfare and protection of wildlife and the Act needs to ensure that both are adequately addressed to reflect current community standards.

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