3 July 2012

It’s Waterfowl Hunting Season

The Minister for Parks and Wildlife, Karl Hampton, today announced the dates for the 2012 Waterfowl Hunting Season.

“The 2012 Northern Territory Waterfowl Hunting season will commence from 6.15am on Wednesday 19 September 2012,” Mr Hampton announced.

“The late September start to the hunting season is due to the late magpie goose nesting, which will result in geese remaining on the floodplains until later in the year and to ensure that geese are fully established on the hunting reserves before hunting commences.

The waterfowl hunting season will have staggered closures.

Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve and Howard Springs Hunting Reserve will close before Christmas at 7.30pm on 23 December 2012. The waterfowl season will close for the remaining two Hunting Reserves, Private Property and Crown Land at 7.45pm on 2 January 2013.

The duration and timing of the season is based on careful consideration by the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport.

“19 September was selected as an appropriate commencement date to ensure that goose populations would be well established in dry season habitat prior to hunting commencing. Staggered closures, which were implemented in recognition of resident concerns regarding disturbance during the Christmas period, have been maintained,” Mr Hampton said.

“It is important that the hunting community observe the early closure at Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve and Howard Springs Hunting Reserve, as hunters will still be able to hunt in other areas during the Christmas break.

“The daily bag limit of 10 magpie geese and 10 ducks, implemented last year to maintain potential hunting effort with the shorter season has been maintained.”

Magpie Geese are classified as protected wildlife in the Northern Territory.

Hunters are reminded of a number of conditions related to waterfowl hunting in the NT:

The use of lead shot is prohibited on all Northern Territory land including Parks and Wildlife Hunting Reserves, Crown Land and private property.
The ban on lead shot has resulted from lead shot poisoning waterfowl that exist at many wetlands being identified as a serious problem and is a part of an overall national strategy to combat the problem.

Waterfowl hunting permits are available prior to the opening of and for the duration of the season - all hunters are required to obtain a permit whether hunting on the Hunting Reserves, Crown Land or private property.

Lodgement of a permit return at the end of the hunting season is not mandatory. However, permit returns have an essential role in determining the overall management of the waterfowl hunting season. Failure to lodge a permit return may reduce our capacity to appropriately manage future waterfowl hunting seasons and place the long-term continuance of the season in jeopardy, particularly increased bag limits which are dependent on detailed knowledge of harvest levels.

You can hunt on:

Designated Parks and Wildlife Service Hunting Reserves (Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve and Howard Springs Hunting Reserve until 23 December 2011 and Shoal Bay Coastal Reserve and Harrison Dam Conservation Reserve until 2 January 2011) provided you have a permit to hunt waterfowl;

Designated Crown Land provided you have both a permit to hunt waterfowl and a permit issued by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure; and

Private property (which includes Aboriginal Land) provided you have a permit to hunt waterfowl, you have the permission of the landholder beforehand and can meet the setback conditions under the firearms act.

“We are continuing to carefully monitor waterfowl populations so we can maintain the balance between this great aspect of the Territory lifestyle and the long term sustainability of magpie geese”.

We acknowledge that there are many different groups of people who enjoy various aspects of the territory lifestyle. We ask that the hunting community obey the early closure at Lambells Lagoon Conservation Reserve and Howard Springs Hunting Reserve out of respect for the local residents.

“It's important that all hunters join with us to ensure the long term sustainability of hunting and obtain a permit before they start shooting. While lodging a permit return is not mandatory, we encourage permit holders to submit a return at the end of the season, as it provides key information for declaring the season and ensuring the sustainability of the magpie goose hunting season for the future”.

“Territorians have enjoyed hunting geese for many years and through careful management and cooperation we can continue this great part of our lifestyle.”

For further information go to www.nt.gov.au/waterfowl

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