

# Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria)

*A fair go for responsible people.*



October 25, 2016

## Deer harvest figures highlight need for greater access

Recreational hunters are doing their bit towards managing increasing deer populations across the state but limited access to key areas is counteracting their efforts.

According to Game Management Authority's 'Estimates of harvest for deer in Victoria', released on Friday, the number of deer harvested by licensed hunters increased by 10,000 from 2014 to 2015.

The results of GMA's telephone surveys of Game Licence-holders endorsed for deer indicated 62,165 deer were harvested during the 2014 deer-hunting season in Victoria and 71,142 were harvested in 2015.

The most commonly harvested species in 2014 and 2015 was Sambar, with an estimated total harvest of 51,390 and 55,094 respectively, followed by Fallow deer, with an estimated 7870 and 14,488 harvested respectively.

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria) Chief Executive Officer Jack Wegman said unless more areas were opened up to recreational hunters the deer population in Victoria would continue to increase.

"An increase of 10,000 deer being harvested in just one year is a great effort by our licensed and responsible recreational hunters," he said. "It puts fresh, hormone-free and lean meat on the table for their families and helps control population growth.

"But deer numbers will continue to increase if the State Government refuses to unlock key areas like Mount Buffalo, parts of Alpine National Park, the Yarra Ranges and the Snow River National Park.

"These areas become breeding grounds for deer, which can cause frustration for neighbouring farmers and, in some cases, obstacles for road users."

Mount Buffalo National Park has become a breeding ground for deer that regularly venture outside of the park. The situation has contributed to the high harvest numbers at Myrtleford in 2014 and 2015.

In 2014 the top towns for deer harvest, in descending order, were Mansfield, Bairnsdale, Dargo, Benalla and Myrtleford. In 2015, the top five were Mansfield, Myrtleford, Dargo, Bairnsdale and Licola.

Deer hunting is not allowed in the Yarra Ranges and the Snowy River National Park despite the fact that those areas have increasing numbers of deer.

Meanwhile, Mr Wegman encouraged farmers who needed assistance managing deer or pest animals on their properties to register for SSAA's Farmer Assist Program. Accredited and insured SSAA Victoria members are ready and willing to help. Log on to [farmerassist.com.au](http://farmerassist.com.au) to find them.

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