

4-11-03

# The Courier

EDITORIAL

## Duck hunting days numbered in Victoria

**T**HE FUTURE of recreational duck hunting in Victoria is back on the agenda, thanks to Ballarat East MLA Geoff Howard.

For the second time in as many weeks Mr Howard has raised a potentially-divisive issue (remember his daylight saving plan?).

This issue is one that needs to be debated.

The Bracks Government cancelled the 2003 duck hunting season to preserve bird populations affected by the drought. Mr Howard wants the ban to be extended indefinitely.

While his plan may have the support of the RSPCA and the Coalition Against Duck Shooting, it is an idea that won't win favour with all of his constituents.

The Sporting Shooters Association is a vocal lobby group which, we can be sure, will speak out long and loud against the idea.

But do they speak for the majority?

There are many Victorians who would question whether a person with a gun taking aim at a bird in flight constitutes a fair sport. Despite the best intentions of the shooters, many ducks do not die humanely, but suffer serious and painful injuries.

Recreational duck hunting is already banned in New South Wales, the ACT and Western Australia.

With any luck, the days of duck hunting in Victoria may well be numbered too.

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