

# Protest aims at disruption

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## **DUCK rescue activists will stand alongside hunters at shooting hotspots this week.**

The Tasmanian season starting on Saturday is the country's only duck shoot this year, with drought forcing moratoriums interstate.

The Coalition against Duck Shooting said it would try to scare ducks at East Coast shooting spots.

"The decision to go ahead with the season in Tasmania puts extreme pressure on native waterbirds, already in serious trouble," campaign director Laurie Levy said.

The usual concerns about cruelty were compounded by fears about lower numbers nationwide.

Mr Levy said the rescue team would stand beside duck shooters at Moulting Lagoon at the entrance to Freycinet National Park on Saturday.

"However, as waterbird numbers are extremely low, we advise shooters to keep away," he said.

Duck shooting has been banned in Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland, with seasons halted this year in Victoria and South Australia.

The Tasmanian Government shortened the season to 10 weeks, starting on March 24 instead of March 10.

"Tasmania's Primary Industries and Water Minister David Llewellyn has ignored the best scientific advice in order to placate Tasmania's duck shooters," Mr Levy said.

"Reducing the season provides a two-week reprieve and does nothing to safeguard native waterbirds in the long term."

Mr Levy called on the Federal Government to take charge of waterbird issues.

"Native waterbirds are nomadic, they fly between states and across Bass Strait, so we cannot have recalcitrant state governments making political decisions without considering numbers across the mainland," he said.

The Tasmanian Field and Game Association said the season would not affect hunters and 10 weeks was long enough.

The RSPCA said the mainland drought had forced more ducks to Tasmania, saying that brought more potential for cruelty because of easier pickings for hunters.

Registered shooters took more than 39,000 ducks last year.