

# Andrews takes aim at dodgy shooters

Mitch Clarke, HERALD SUN, 23 MARCH 22

PREMIER Daniel Andrews has put dodgy duck shooters on notice, pledging to take further action if authorised officers detected widespread bad behaviour.

Since the 2022 season launched last Wednesday, authorised officers have patrolled more than 120 different wetlands, according to new data from the Game Management Authority.

In four days, almost 1000 game licences were checked by officials, while 802 bags were also looked through.

No hunter was deemed to have collected more than four birds, but animal rescuers claim duck shooters are “blatantly” flouting the law by killing and dumping more animals than permitted.

One activist told the Herald Sun he stumbled across a pit of 23 slaughtered native birds that had been dumped at Kerang on Saturday.

Under the current duck shooting season, shooters are allowed to hunt only four birds a day.

Several blue-winged shovelers and hardheads – which are both threatened species – have also been shot by hunters.

An investigation into at least one rogue shooter has commenced.

Mr Andrews on Tuesday said it was his understanding that the “vast majority” of shooters followed the rules.

“Certain activity is lawful and certain activity isn’t. You put everything at risk if people behave badly,” he said.

“If we saw enough of that, we would of course act on it.”

A GMA spokesman said a number of breaches to game hunting and public safety laws were being actively pursued.

Authorised officers detected 30 offences by hunters and four offences by protesters, who were issued with banning notices.

The Herald Sun is aware of several activists who have been arrested by police for rescuing wounded ducks.

Mr Andrews caused controversy last week by comparing duck shooting to playing golf or going to the footy.