

Code of Practice for the humane destruction of birds by shooting in South Australia

A permit to destroy wildlife issued under Section 53(1)(c) of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* is required and compliance with this Code of Practice is a condition of permit.

Background

This Code of Practice was developed by the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) and was endorsed by the South Australian Wildlife Ethics Committee on 11 May 2007.

All persons involved in the destruction of birds by shooting should be aware of the legislative requirements, including animal welfare requirements, for this activity. The welfare of animals is of paramount importance to DEH and the treatment of all animals must comply with the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985*.

Purpose of the Code

This Code sets an achievable standard of humane conduct and details the minimum required of persons shooting birds in South Australia.

Shooters are obliged to meet the requirements of this Code of Practice as a condition of their destruction permit.

Scope of the Code

This Code applies to:

- all native bird species (protected and unprotected), and
- duck species and Stubble Quail as specified under a hunting open season.

Legal obligations

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972

Protected native bird species

In South Australia, most native birds are protected under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (NPW Act). A destruction permit (pursuant to Section 53(1)(c) NPW Act) is required to destroy protected animals and may be issued when environmental, economic and/or social impacts are being sustained. DEH is responsible for assessing destruction permit applications and issuing permits.

Where a destruction permit has been issued, no hunting permit is required although written permission of the landowner is required in cases where the shooter is neither the landowner nor his/her employee or agent.

Shooters are obliged to meet the requirements of this Code of Practice as a condition of their destruction permit.

Things to consider

Unprotected native bird species

There are some native bird species that are not protected under the NPW Act. These unprotected birds species are listed under Schedule 10 of the NPW Act:

- Zebra Finch, Budgerygah, Red Wattlebird, Grey-backed Silvereye, Galah, Little Corella, Australian Raven, Little Crow, Australian Crow, Little Raven.

A destruction permit is not required to shoot these unprotected native bird species, however you are still obliged to meet the requirements of this Code of Practice.

Landowners, and shooters acting on behalf of the landowner, do not require a hunting permit when shooting on their land.

Hunting of duck and quail

Duck and quail hunters require an open season hunting permit (pursuant to Section 68A NPW Act). Duck hunters are required to pass a Waterfowl Identification Test (WIT). Hunters are obliged to meet the requirements of this Code of Practice.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985 states that a person who ill-treats an animal is guilty of an offence. This includes, but is not limited to;

- having injured an animal fails to take reasonable steps to alleviate any pain suffered by the animal, or
- kills an animal in a manner that causes the animal unnecessary pain.

Firearms Legislation

The shooter must comply with all provisions of the *Firearms Act 1977* and all subordinate regulations, including that relevant to storage, transportation and use of firearms and ammunition.

Summary Offences Act 1953

Shooters should be aware of the *Summary Offences Act 1953* and must comply with the provisions of that Act. Note that Section 51(1) of the *Summary Offences Act 1953* states that “a person who discharges a firearm or throws a stone or other missile, without reasonable cause and so as to injure, annoy or frighten, or be likely to injure, annoy or frighten, or so as to damage, or be likely to damage, any property, is guilty of an offence”.

An additional consideration

Shooting is time consuming and in isolation not considered an effective method for large-scale control of wildlife causing impacts. To achieve a reduction in impacts being sustained an integrated management approach should be taken and would include a range of non-lethal methods. Shooting should only be used in a strategic manner to reinforce the effect of the non-lethal methods used.

Meeting your obligations under this Code

You should take a shot only if:

1. it is safe to do so,
2. the animal is clearly visible,
3. the animal can be positively identified by the shooter,
4. your firearm/shot size combination meets the requirements of this Code of Practice,
5. the point of aim and firearm combination meets the requirements of this Code of Practice (refer to diagrams),
6. the target animal is within your personal shooting range capability, and
7. you are confident of killing the animal. If in doubt, do NOT shoot.

Shooting should be avoided at times when birds are nesting and there are dependent young present.

Only one bird should be targeted at any one time. Shooting at a flock is not an acceptable practice.

Birds must not be shot from a moving vehicle or other moving platform such as a boat.

Injured birds

The shooter must ensure that prior to shooting, he/she has the necessary equipment to kill any bird that is injured but not killed on the first shot.

Injured birds must be killed as quickly and humanely as possible by;

- second shot, or
- a blow with a heavy instrument to the rear of the skull (the bird should be either restrained or immobile).

Ensuring animals are dead

Death must be confirmed before animals are disposed of or left unattended.

Disposal of dead birds

Dead birds must be gathered immediately and stored out of sight in an appropriate container for later disposal. Dead birds must be disposed of in a manner approved by local Council and cannot be used for a secondary purpose, sold, swapped or traded without further approval from DEH.

All hunters of duck and quail must leave a fully feathered wing on any harvested duck and/or quail until immediately prior to cooking or the duck and/or quail has been taken to the person's ordinary place of residence.

Human health issues

The transmission of avian diseases to humans is possible from the inhalation of feather dust. Persons handling dead birds should wear appropriate protective clothing including facemasks.

Public risk

Any shooting activity must be planned and undertaken in a manner that avoids the possibility of injury to the public. Before discharging the firearm, the shooter must ensure that the background to the target area is free of persons, property, infrastructure and/or assets to eliminate any risk of collateral damage from spent shot.

The use of centre fire or rim fire rifles presents a serious risk to the public when fired without due regard for the background. These rifles should not be used in a built up area.

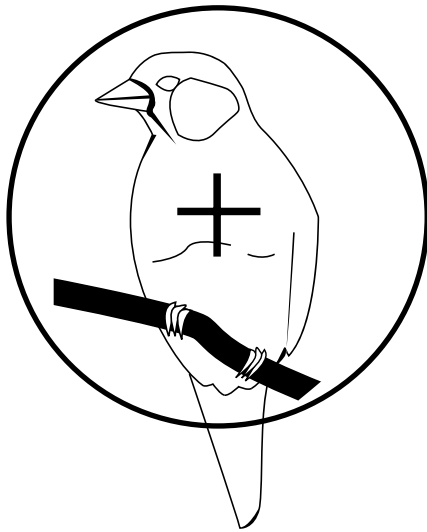
A shooter intending to use firearms in a built up area must seek approval from the local Police prior to commencing the activity.

Shooting should only take place during daylight hours.

Onlookers should be discouraged whenever possible.

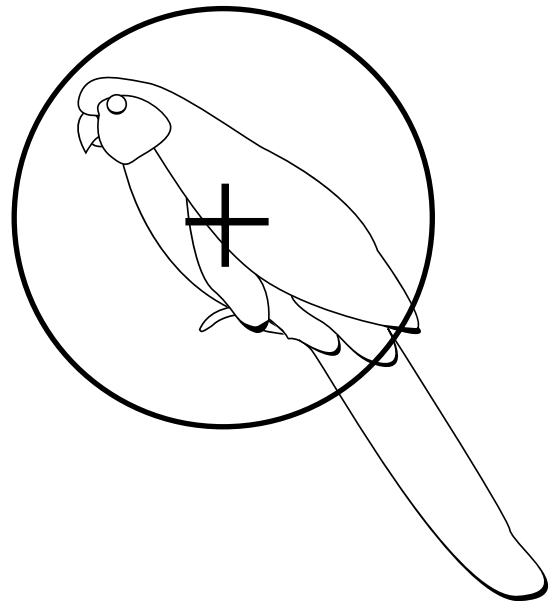
Recommended points of aim and firearm combination

Examples



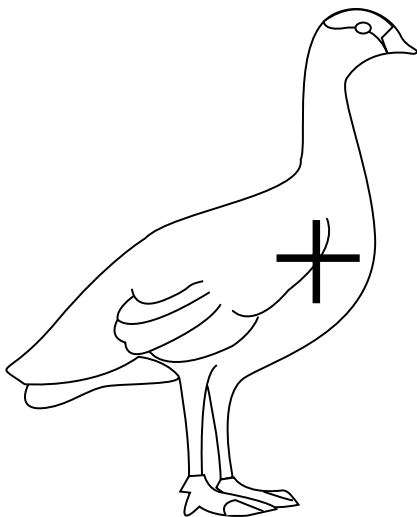
Zebra Finch

.410 shotgun or 12 gauge shotgun
shot size 9s – 10s



Rosella

12 gauge shotgun shot size 6's – 8's

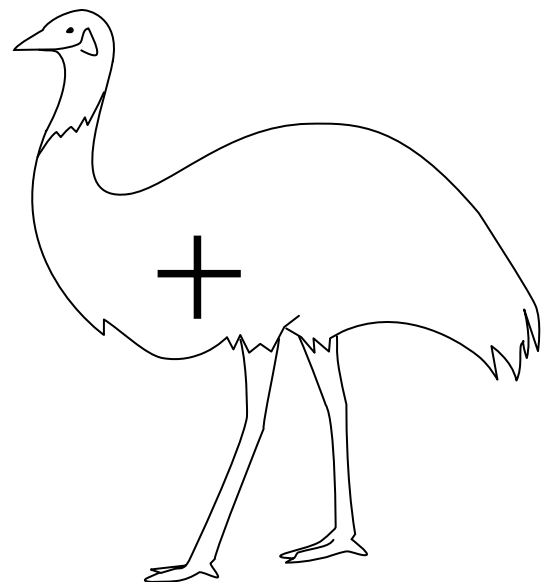


Cape Barren Goose

.222 rifle (minimum) with telescopic sights
shot size 50 grain minimum

or

12 gauge shotgun
shot size BB – 2's (36g)



Emu

Heart shot .243 rifle minimum
shot size 87 – 100 grain

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With the exception of Cape Barren Geese, shotgun gauges other than those specified may be used. However, the shooter must make appropriate adjustments to optimum and maximum ranges, accommodating the limits of the firearm. When using shotguns, ensure that choke configuration delivers a dense pattern on

the target within the specified distances. For larger birds (Cape Barren Geese and injured Emus), tighter chokes are preferred e.g. ½ to full.

Firearms and shot size specifications for the humane destruction of native birds in open-air situations.

Bird Species	Firearm	Optimum range (m)	Maximum range (m)	Shot size
Small birds to Stubble Quail size Silvereyes [^] , Zebra Finch [^] , Budgerygah [^]	.410 shotgun 12 gauge shotgun	15 25	25 30	9s – 10s 9s – 10s
Stubble Quail*	12 gauge shotgun	25	30	8's - 9's
Birds up to Red Wattlebird size Red Wattlebird [^] , Rosellas, Lorikeets, Noisy Miner	12 gauge shotgun	25	30	6's – 8's
Birds up to Teal size Galah [^] , Little Corella [^] , Silver Gull, Chestnut Teal*, Grey Teal*, Pink-eared Duck*, Hardhead (White-eyed Duck*), Black-tailed Native Hen, Masked Lapwing	12 gauge shotgun	30	35	3's - 6's
Birds up to Mountain Duck size Long-billed Corella, Sulphur- crested Cockatoo, Cormorants, Australian Magpie, Little Crow [^] , Australian Crow [^] , Australian Raven [^] , Pacific Black Duck*, Australian Wood Duck*, Australian Shelduck (Mountain Duck*), Purple Swamphen	12 gauge shotgun	30	35	3's - 5's
Cape Barren Geese, Black Swan	.222 rifle (minimum) with telescopic sights Shotgun – only 12 gauge	50 30	100 35	50 grain minimum BB-2's (36g)
Emu	Heart shot .243 rifle minimum Head shot - shotgun (injured birds only)	50 5	100 10	87-100 grain BB - 2's

* Game species (additional Hunting Open Season conditions apply).

It is mandatory to use non-toxic shot, such as steel or bismuth (adjusting shot size and chokes as necessary), when hunting duck in South Australia.

[^] Unprotected native species (*Schedule 10, National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*).

Disclaimer

Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Birds by Shooting in South Australia Dated: June 2007

This Code is based on the knowledge and technology available at the time of publication and may need to be varied in the future in light of new knowledge.

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Further Information

Contact your nearest Department for Environment and Heritage Office
www.environment.sa.gov.au

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