



Where can I hunt in State forest?

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Hunting in State Forest

Generally, hunting for pest animals and game species is permitted in all State forests, however some restrictions may apply. The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for managing State forest. Hunters are advised to consult the local DSE Office for specific information about any restrictions that apply to the area of State forest that they wish to hunt. Pest animals may be hunted at any time and hunting for game species is allowed only during the open season for that species.

Anyone wishing to hunt game in Victoria, including juniors (12-17 years), must hold a current Game Licence. "Game" includes those species of duck, deer, quail, pheasants and partridges declared to be game in Victoria. Game Licences can only be issued from the Game & Wildlife Licensing Unit. Should you wish to apply for a Game Licence, contact your nearest DSE office for an application form or call the Game & Wildlife Licensing Hotline on (03) 9412 4992 between 9 am and 12 noon, Monday to Friday to have an application form sent out.

No Game Licence is required to hunt pest animals in Victoria; however, if you wish to hunt pest animals with a firearm, you must be the holder of a current Firearms Licence. The hunting of pest animals on Crown land is now seen as an accepted genuine reason for hunters wishing to apply for or renew a Firearm's Licence. To satisfy the requirement of proof, the Department of Sustainability and Environment can issue hunters with a Registration of Interest to Hunt Pest Animals on Crown Land form at a small cost. For information on where you can obtain a Registration of Interest form from your local area, contact major DSE Regional offices at: East Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat, Box Hill, Traralgon and Benalla. For information relating to firearms licensing issues, contact the Firearms Registry, Victoria Police, on (03) 9628 6830.

Where can't I hunt in State Forest?

Some areas of State forest are closed to hunting. No hunting is allowed in the area immediately surrounding the Rubicon Power Station. Game species may not be hunted at any time in the Mt.Cole State forest sanctuary, and the Gunbower Island Sanctuary, Kow Swamp, and Reedy Lakes near Kerang. The location of other sanctuaries should be checked with the local DSE Office.

As well as State forest, there are many land classifications throughout Victoria and, depending on the type, hunting

may or may not be permitted. Generally, the following applies:

Land Classification	Hunting permitted?
State forest and other unoccupied Crown land	Game species may be hunted during the open season only. Pest animals may be hunted at any time. Some areas of State forest between Warburton, Noojee and McMahons Creek are closed to all forms of deer hunting and a small area to the north of the township of Marysville is closed to hunting Sambar Deer with dogs (scent-trailing hounds and gun dogs). Specific areas around the Rubicon Power Station have been closed to all forms of deer hunting and an area around the townships of Jamieson and Kevington has been closed to deer hunting with dogs. For a map of the areas closed to deer hunting, contact the DSE Customer Service Centre on 136 186.
State Game Reserves	Game species may be hunted, but only during the open season. Sixteen State Game Reserves are available for quail hunting. Pest animals may not be hunted at any time, unless specifically authorised by the Department.
Sanctuaries	Game species may not be hunted at any time. Pest animals may be hunted.
Melbourne Water Catchment Areas	Hunting of any type is not permitted at any time.
Forest Parks, Flora and Fauna Reserves and Nature Reserves	Hunting of any type is not permitted at any time.
National Parks, State Parks, Coastal Parks, Wilderness Parks	Generally, hunting of any type is not permitted at any time, however there are some exceptions.

Private Land (includes leased and licensed Crown Land)	Game (only during the open season) and pest animals may be hunted, but only with the permission of the land owner/manager
Unoccupied State Forest and Unoccupied Crown Land	Game species may be hunted during the open season only. Pest animals may be hunted at any time.
Occupied State Forest and Occupied Crown Land	You must obtain permission from the lessee or licensee before entering these areas to hunt.

This table is general in nature. For more specific details of where you may hunt, call the nearest DSE Regional office, before you enter the field.

Firearms Safety

Remember - Many people use State forest for recreation and for their livelihood. If hunting in State forest don't shoot on or across public roads or tracks at any time, and don't shoot in or towards populated areas (this includes camping and day visitor areas and walking tracks).

All firearm users must practice firearm safety to reduce the risk of firearm incidents. There is no such thing as a firearm "accident". In every case, at least one of the Firearm Safety Rules has been broken. Responsible hunters will know and apply the basic firearm safety rules at all times and will encourage other hunters to do the same. The following firearms safety code will help avoid any risk of injury.

Firearms Safety Code

The Department of Sustainability and Environment endorses the Firearms Safety Code, which was prepared by the Firearms Consultative Committee and promotes safe firearms handling practices. You should know the **eight basic safety rules** before you handle firearms and insist anyone who goes shooting with you follows these rules. If you wish to know more about firearm safety, or obtain a copy of the Firearms Safety Code, contact your local District Firearms Officer.

Treat every firearm as being loaded

Check every firearm yourself; do not take the word of another person that a firearm is unloaded.

Pass or accept only open and unloaded firearms. Never accept or pass a firearm to another person unless the breech is open and all ammunition has been removed from the firearm.

Always point firearms in a safe direction

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction. A safe direction will depend on where you are and what you are doing.

Never have loaded firearms in the car, home or camp

Before entering a car, home or camp, completely unload your firearm. Ensure that the action is open and that there is no ammunition in either the breech or the magazine.

Identify your target and what is behind it

Make sure of your target before firing. It is not good enough just to think that what you see is your target. Your target must be positively identified before firing; if in doubt, **DON'T SHOOT**. The firing zone is not only the area between you and your target, but also the area beyond the target, which is still within the extreme range of your firearm.

Never fire at hard surfaces or water

Consider the area in which you are shooting. Could a ricochet occur? A ricochet will almost certainly result from shooting at water or smooth flat surfaces and rocks.

Store ammunition and firearms separately

When not in use, lock away firearms and ammunition separately. Not only is this good sense but, in Victoria, there is a legal obligation on firearms owners to store firearms and ammunition separately in locked repositories or similar containers.

No alcohol or drugs when handling firearms

Alcohol and many day-to-day drugs and medicines dull and slow your mental and physical reactions. When using firearms, this is an extremely dangerous condition as the ability to recognise and react to dangerous situations swiftly and accurately is essential.

Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms

Before attempting to negotiate a fence or obstacle unload your firearm. Do not rely on safety catches. Safety catches, at best, only supplement the safe handling of firearms.

Observe this code:

Insist others do the same

Contacts for Hunting Organisations

Many hunting organisations offer hunter education courses. These courses often address firearms safety issues, bush craft, legislative requirements for game hunters, game biology and hunting skills. For further details, contact relevant hunting organisations to see if they offer these courses.

Australian Bowhunters Association
29 Young Street, Oakleigh 3166
PH/FAX (03) 9579 4714

Australian Deer Association (Vic)
PO Box 155, Epping 3076
PH/FAX (03) 9408 3472

Australian Deer Research Foundation
For more information or a copy of their latest catalogue
write to PO Box 454, Croydon 3136.

Central Highlands Working Gundog and Trailing Club
☎ 5344 9032

Sporting Shooter's Association of Australia (Vic)
91a Kingsway, Glen Waverley 3171
☎ (03) 9590 0177, FAX 9590 0188

Victorian Deer Association
PO Box 7046, Noble Park East 3174
☎ (03) 9547 8145, FAX (03) 9546 5044

Victorian Field & Game Association
PO Box 464, Seymour 3660
☎ (03) 5799 0960, FAX (03) 5799 0961

Victorian Game and Deerstalkers Association
PO Box 127, Blackburn South 3130
☎ (03) 9756 6344

Victorian Rifle Association
3/17a - 19 Industrial Avenue, Hoppers Crossing 3029
☎ (03) 9360 9298, FAX (03) 9369 6727

Working Gundog Association of Australia
☎ (03) 9741 9534

DSE Contacts

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for managing Victoria's State Forest. For further information about game hunting, wildlife, pest animals or the management of Crown land and sanctuaries, contact DSE's Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Visit DSE's website

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au>
then select "Forestry".

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