

Safety Notice: **Walking on Hunting Grounds**



Recreational Hunting will soon be allowed in many NSW National Parks and reserves.

If you or someone in your group is accidentally shot the outcome could be devastating.

There is no legal requirement for hunters to have ever fired a gun before their first solo hunting trip, although they may mean well, accidents can and do happen. Many hunters are friendly well-meaning people and they do not wish to bring harm to walkers. If you meet a hunter on track, be courteous and share you're walking plans with them.

We have outlined a few tips to help you improve your chance of survival and enjoyment when walking in our beautiful bushland.

When planning your walking trip

1) Check with the Game Council, State Forest or NPWS to see if hunting is currently allowed in the area you plan to visit. Unfortunately the Game Council will not tell you of any specific hunting trips booked – only if hunting is generally approved.

If hunting is allowed– your safest option is to avoid that area.

2) If you choose to walk through a recreational hunting ground, obey signage and wear high visibility clothing especially hat and shirt – avoid colours that increase the risk of you been confused as a game animal. Also consider your pack colour.

3) Ensure children are also dressed in high visibility clothing with hat – the upper body is especially important as children are a similar height to many feral animals.

4) Walk as a group and if you see or hear a hunter, call out to identify yourself as human. Please be aware that it is illegal to interfere with a recreational hunter and there are significant penalties in place. Once the hunter has acknowledged you, wave politely, be friendly and don't interfere with the hunters stalking.

What to do if you hear nearby gun fire?

Duck, find cover and shout to make your presence known to the hunter. Once shooting has stopped make yourself visible and heard, try to gain eye contact with the hunter.

First Aid

Ensure at least two people in your party are trained in remote area first aid. The first step will be to ensure the area is safe for you and other people nearby, ensure the hunter's gun is rendered safe. Refresh your first aid training - pay close attention to modules relating to the management of; gunshot wounds, shock, severe bleeding, resuscitation, fractures, head injuries, penetrating chest wounds (including Pneumothorax), group emergency management, calling for medical assistance in remote areas and psychological injuries.

If you suspect illegal behaviour?	Suggested action.
Hunters behaving in an unsafe way - perhaps under the influence of drugs.	Move to a safer area and report to police by calling 000
Vehicles carrying live animals in a National Park could be people seeding new hunting populations	Photograph the vehicle (if safe) and call 000 or local parks staff ASAP
If guns are left unattended, loaded or not safe at a campsite.	If you feel safe to do so, ask the hunter politely to store their weapons, otherwise report to police by calling 000
Hunting on total fire ban day	Inform the hunter of the fire ban and report the incident to crime stoppers
If you see any native animals that have been killed or injured.	Photograph dead or injured animals and report to crime stoppers and to WIRES (13 000 WIRES)
Illegal hunting, eg hunting at night, outside hunting areas, unlicensed hunters, shooting of native animals.	Move to a safer area and report to police by calling 000.

Public safety is just one of many reasons why hunting in our National Parks should not be allowed.