

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change  
Minister for Solar Homes



Friday, 1 October 2021

## **BREAKING THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING CHAIN**

Victorians are being urged to report illegal wildlife trafficking to Crime Stoppers Victoria in a new campaign to stop native and exotic animals being trafficked in and out of Australia.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio announced the *Break the Chain* campaign today – produced in partnership with the Conservation Regulator, Agriculture Victoria and Crime Stoppers Victoria.

There has been a 59 per cent increase in wildlife-crime related tips to Crime Stoppers Victoria in the past year.

It's vital the public continues to come forward with information on wildlife crime and remains on high alert for illegal animal trafficking online, or among people they know.

Native species like the shingleback skink lizard are in demand overseas with an asking price of up to \$10,000 on the black market, while birds like the red-tailed black cockatoo can fetch up to \$100,000.

The Conservation Regulator has investigated cases where people have attempted to illegally export reptiles through the post by concealing them in socks and tape.

Illegally imported animals and their products can also pose a great biosecurity risk. Exotic animals can bring in new animal and human diseases such as foot and mouth disease or rabies. These diseases can devastate primary production and the environment.

Exotic pest animals such as the red-eared slider turtle and pygmy hedgehog aren't pets. Preventing their entry into Victoria is the most effective way to protect our biosecurity.

Every Victorian can play a role in stopping the cruel business of illegal wildlife trafficking by reporting what they know to Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000 or online at [crimestoppersvic.com.au](http://crimestoppersvic.com.au).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Lily D'Ambrosio**

*"Taking native animals from the bush and trafficking them overseas isn't just illegal – it's cruel – and many animals don't survive."*

*"The Conservation Regulator will continue to investigate and prosecute those responsible."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas**

*"Biosecurity is integral to maintaining our way of life – on farms, in backyards, in businesses, in the environment and at home. It is fundamental to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of all Victorians."*

### **Quote attributable to Crime Stoppers Victoria CEO Stella Smith**

*"Illegal wildlife trade in Australia can be as profitable for criminals as drugs and firearms trafficking. Crime Stoppers needs the community to help shut the trade down."*

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