

Goulburn India Myna Bird Action Group



Overview

Objectives of the programme

Animal welfare protocols & NSW legislation

Environmental, economic and potential human health impacts

Identification, distribution and biology

Types of traps

Tips before you start trapping

Getting started and trap operation

Where can you buy traps?

Want to help more?



Objectives

1. increased public awareness that this pest is a serious environmental and health threat, not just a nuisance

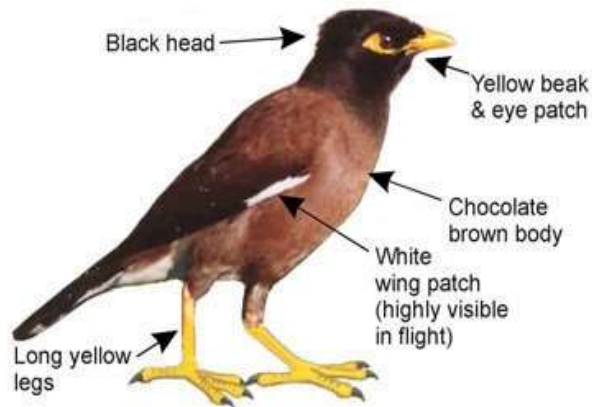
2. public education aimed at limiting the spread of the species by reducing its feeding and breeding opportunities;

3. a humane reduction programme

Correct identification



**Common (Indian)
Myna Bird**



Often seen on the ground looking for food, generally in places where humans gather and eat, or on open grass.

**Native Australian
Noisy Miner Bird**



Often seen feeding on native plants, eating insects and nectar from the flowers.

WANTED!

INDIAN MYNAS

(CHOCOLATE BROWN BIRD, ABOUT 12 CM TALL, WITH BLACK HEAD AND NECK, AND; A YELLOW BEAK, EYE PATCH, FEET AND LEGS.)



FOR

- Attacking small chicks.
- Evicting small native birds and mammals & taking over nesting sites.
- Foul on backs of livestock and contaminate feed bins.
- Carriers of bird mite - potential impacts on human health.

Global problem

Native distribution shown in **blue** and invasive distribution shown in **red**



Invasive species in Australia, New Zealand, Madagascar, USA (Miami and Orlando), Hawaii, South Africa and Zimbabwe

Why were they introduced and why are they a pest?

Introduced into Australia in the late 1800s to control insects in market gardens in Melbourne

Breed more than once a season

Social, economic and environmental impacts

Highly adapted to urban landscapes

Territorial, aggressive and intelligent



Biology

Omnivores – eat vegetables/fruit and meat

Pairs breed 1-3 times annually and lay 4-6 greenish-blue coloured eggs

Incubation period of 13-14 days

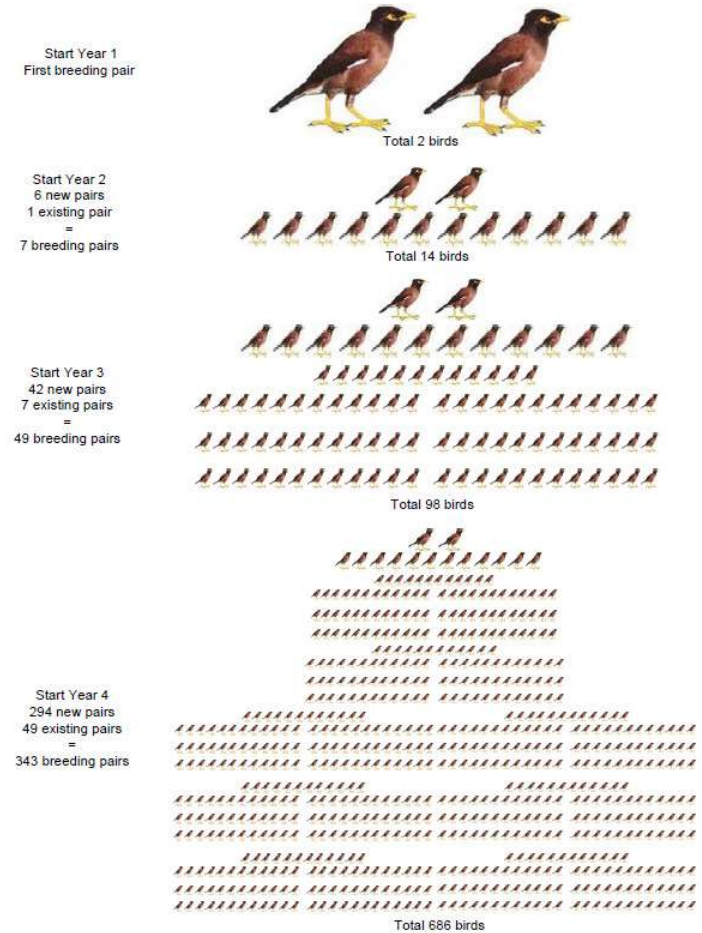
Juveniles may form breeding pairs from nine months of age

Reach sexual maturity in 9-12 months

Breeding season from August to March

Life span is approximately 4-5 years

Pairs breed together for life and each pair can produce up to 235,298 birds every six years!



	generation 1	generation 2	generation 3	generation 4	generation 5	generation 6
total birds start	2	14	98	686	4802	33614
total breeding pairs start	1	7	49	343	2401	16807
offspring	12	84	588	4116	28812	201684
new breeding pairs	6	42	294	2058	14406	100842
plus previous generation pairs	0	7	49	343	2401	16807
total breeding pairs end	7	49	343	2401	16807	117649
total birds end	14	98	686	4802	33614	235298

Social organisation

In evenings, Mynas within a one km radius gather in a communal roost (except nesting females and juveniles)

Roost sites selected where there is dense foliage and shelter (such as Conifer Trees) as well as under buildings and bridges

Mynas maintain territories and defend them aggressively

Each territory tends to cover a nesting site and nearby feeding area and can range in size from 117m² to 2 hectares (Tideman 1997)

Forage in groups of 5-6 (can be larger)

Noise at roost sites : pre dawn and dusk



Environmental impacts

Take over nesting hollows of tree dwelling mammals such as possums

Invade nesting hollows of native birds and eat small chicks and their eggs

Compete for food and resources and drive small birds out of yards and garden

Feed on invertebrates, insects and small reptiles such as skinks



Tips for before you start trapping

Reduce breeding and feeding opportunities:

- keep pet food inside, or when feeding pets, clean up leftovers immediately after they are finished
- always dispose of your rubbish correctly
- stop direct feeding birds
- block any entry holes into roofs and install gutter guards or bird proofing (ie spikes, reflectors or fake owls) in problem locations

Identify roost trees:

- remove unsuitable shrubs/trees eg. Cocos Palms
(*Note: Removal of trees may require Council approval*)

Create native bird attracting gardens:

- reduce open space (lawns) and plant native shrubs (*ie Grevillia spp*) to attract native birds and create competition

Types of traps



Pee Gee Myna Trap

- Can build yourself
- free plans online (Canberra Group)
- Trap is quite flimsy

Types of traps



Mirror Tower Trap (\$120)

- Expensive
- Can be flimsy
- Has a mirror to attract birds through entrance (you can include this as a trial on any of the traps)



Mini Myna Magnet Trap (\$220)

- Very expensive
- Built very strong for a little bird
- Trap is large and quite bulky

Men's Shed Indian Myna bird trap



- Relatively small, lightweight, cheap and can catch multiple birds at any one time
 - All traps are tailor made by one of our local Men's Sheds and all funds go towards improving Men's Shed programs.
- Traps are available for purchase from your closest Men's Shed for a price of **\$50** (details for trap collection from Men's Sheds provided at end of online workshop).

Euthanasia – Who specifies humane methods?

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (state government) specifies the humane methods for euthanasia for various animal species, including Indian Myna birds.

This involves consultation with various stakeholders including, animal welfare agencies such as the RSPCA.

There are three documents that prescribe methods of trapping and euthanasia for Indian Myna birds, developed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the RSPCA (*documents are available for download and will be provided at the end of the presentation via email*):

NSW DPI instructions for Humane euthanasia of trapped birds

Euthanasia of all trapped birds is the responsibility of the trap operator, the following methods are specified by the NSW Department of Industries and RSPCA:

Cervical Dislocation (breaking of the neck)

- Carefully remove birds from the trap by hand or using a hand held net.
- Dislocate the neck by taking the bird's legs in the left hand (if right handed) and the head between the first two fingers of the right hand with the thumb under the beak. A sharp jerk with each hand, pulling the head backwards over the neck will break the spinal cord and carotid arteries.
- This method is free, considered very effective and humane if undertaken correctly and can be undertaken at your home.

Injection of barbiturate

- Can only be undertaken by a trained veterinary professional.

Inhalation of CO2 gas

- Hospitality grade regulators can be purchased and tanks can be hired (all at the cost of the trap operator) from various companies in the local area.

All birds are to be euthanised within 24 hours of capture, preferably in the evening so that traps can be cleaned and re-set (unless using a caller bird).

NSW DPI instructions on Animal welfare protocols

- Trapped Indian Mynas are to be euthanased within 24 hours of capture
- If you use a 'caller' bird it will also require food, shelter and shade (*Using a caller bird or taped-recordings of target bird calls can assist with attracting birds into your trap*)
- Do not to use seed-based food in traps as this can attract native birds
- Do not put traps out if you are not able to monitor
- Carcasses are to be placed in a plastic bag in your general waste bin (red lid)

Animals are not to be treated cruelly and the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* must be adhered to at all times.

Strict penalties and charges can apply if anyone is found to be treating animals inhumanly.

Getting started and trap operation

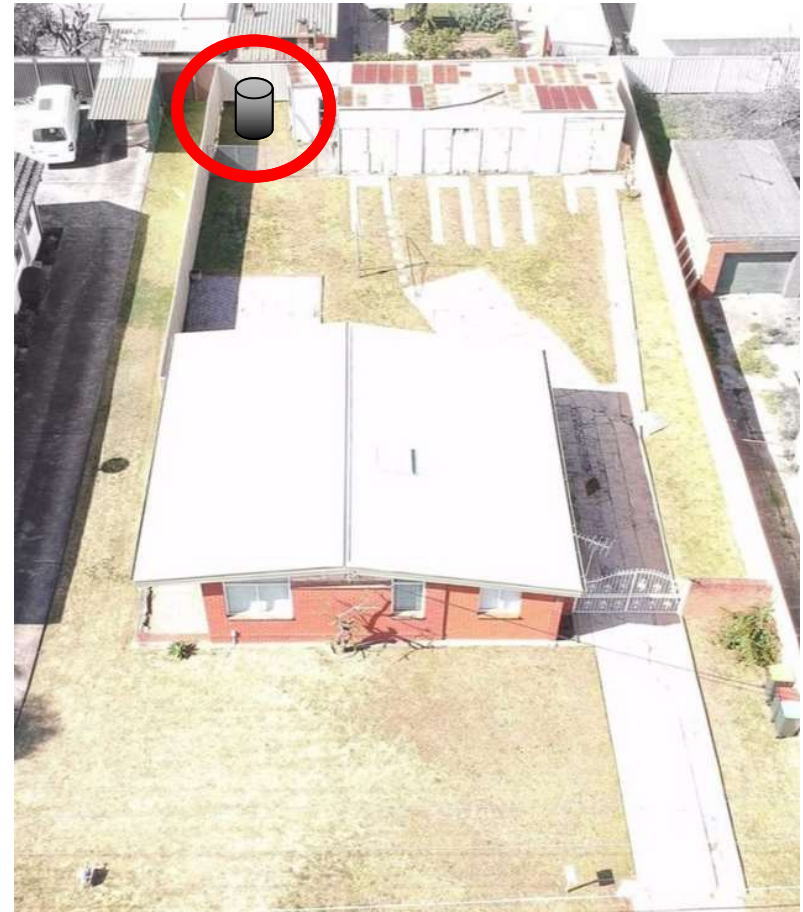
**Free feed for days before
setting trap**

**Make sure Indian Mynas are
feeding freely at the place
before setting trap**

Trap location



- Where Indian Mynas are already feeding
- Short mowed grass is best
- Away from curtains, cat access (eg raised table)



Monitoring and data collection

Record any Indian Myna bird sightings using
<http://www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan/>



Thank you for participating in the Indian Myna Bird Action Programme

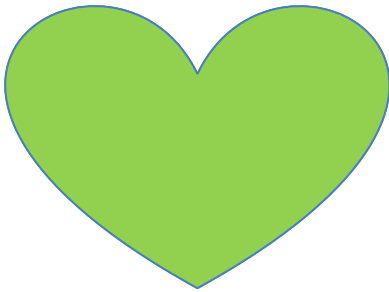
Please join the online community to discuss
questions and issues with your trapping



Goulburn Indian Myna Bird Action Group (GIMBAG)

Volunteer

we need a local committee!



- Traps and hiring
- Humane disposal
- Media (social and print)
- Volunteers and mentoring
- Innovation sub-committee (trap improvements etc)
- Public education – workshops & printed material



Please join the online community to discuss
Questions, issues and successes with your trapping

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