

What is being done to control Indian Mynas in Canberra?

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc. has strategies to tackle these introduced pests.

These include:

- raising public awareness that mynas are an environmental and health threat, not just a nuisance
- providing community information on how to reduce their feeding, roosting and breeding opportunities, and
- a humane trapping program.

The trapping program – endorsed by the RSPCA and the ACT Government – has been successful in removing over 45,000 mynas from around Canberra gardens in 7 years. They were the 3rd most common bird in Canberra before members started trapping them. The 2011-12 bird survey by the Canberra Ornithologists Group now put mynas as the 20th most common bird in Canberra. It is now very noticeable that there are much fewer mynas in Canberra suburbs, although they can still be found around shopping centres, schools and industrial areas.

The Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc. works with a number of community groups in other areas and with researchers at the Australian National University, to better understand the impacts of mynas and how to best reduce their numbers.

Please do not interfere with any traps that you might see in people's yards. They are doing something very important for our environment.



What is the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc?

The Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc. (CIMAG) is a non-profit community action group that aims to protect our native birds and mammals from the threat posed by the introduced Indian Myna (or Common Myna) in the Canberra region. If you want to know more or participate in CIMAG activities contact CIMAG:

T: 02 6231 7461
E: president@indianmynaaction.org.au
W: www.indianmynaaction.org.au

'You can have native birds or Indian Mynas – but not both.'

Ian Fraser – local naturalist and
2006 Natural History Medallion winner

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Australian Government

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc.

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the

Indian Myna



Why is this bird bad news for Australia's native birds and small mammals?



Why is the Indian Myna a problem?

The World Conservation Union has included the Indian Myna in the list of the 100 most invasive species in the world and they have been described as an extreme threat to Australia.

Indian Mynas were brought to Canberra in 1968 when somebody released some in the suburb of Forrest. Numbers increased to an estimated 150 mynas per square kilometre in some areas of Canberra, outcompeting our native birds and arboreal mammals for nesting sites, preying on eggs, chicks and mammal young.

Prior to the community trapping program in 2006, feral myna numbers around Canberra were estimated to be around 93,000 birds.

Indian Mynas:

- are noisy, aggressive and not afraid of humans
- during breeding season, take over nesting hollows, harassing and evicting native birds and animals which use the hollows
- kill the chicks of other birds or destroy their eggs
- block the entries to hollows, causing the inhabitants to die of starvation, after which they then lay their eggs in the hollow
- can raise up to three broods of up to 8 chicks every year, and
- spend their nights in noisy communal roosts.

Indian Mynas can create fire risks in buildings by making scrappy nests in roofs from sticks and any available rubbish.

They hang around outdoor eating areas, walking over tables in search of scraps. They also forage in open rubbish bins – so it isn't hard to see the potential public health risk they pose.

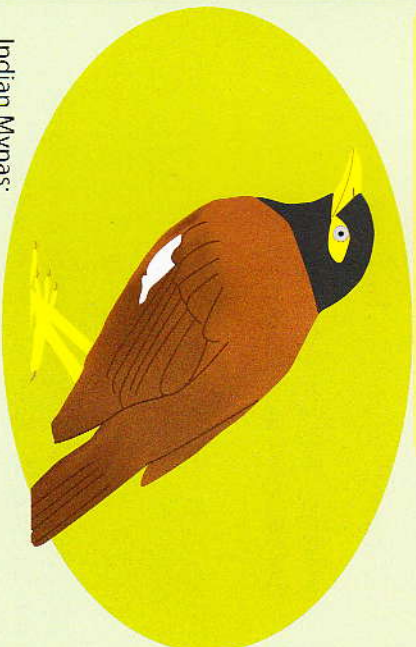
Where did they come from?

Indian Mynas occur naturally in southern Asia. It has been introduced to countries around the world, including Australia, New Zealand and many Pacific islands.

It was introduced into Melbourne's market gardens in the 1860s to control insects and then to far north Queensland to control insects in cane fields. This failed.

Because they are aggressive and highly successful scavengers, mynas are now often the most common bird in cities and towns along the east coast of Australia. They adapt easily to human, urban and rural landscapes. Intelligent and aggressive, mynas are now often the predominant bird in urban areas all along the east coast of Australia.

What do they look like?

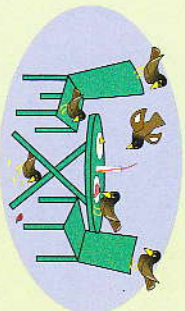


Indian Mynas:

- are medium sized chocolate brown with a black head and neck
- are about 15 cm tall
- have a yellow beak, eye patch, feet and legs
- have white wing patches which are obvious when the birds are flying
- strut rather than walk.

What can I do about them?

You can help:



Don't feed them.
Clear away food scraps when eating outdoors.

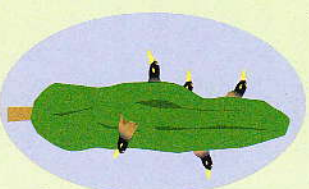
Feed pets indoors, or clear away when they've finished.



Block holes in roofs or eaves to prevent Mynas from nesting – make sure you don't accidentally imprison a possum, bat or other native animal.



Avoid planting trees with dense foliage (such as pencil pines) which Mynas will use for roosting at night. Plant more shrubs to reduce open areas in gardens.



On farms and rural properties, feed stock only as much as they need, cover the feed bins and clean up any spills.

