

Around the Traps – March 2010

The **Hawkesbury** Indian Myna action program is a huge success story. The program is being facilitated by the Hawkesbury City Council and the Hawkesbury Men's Shed — the latter are helping to build traps. With this backing and with 8 enthusiastic and energetic Area Coordinators spread across the shire, they are having great success in educating the community and in trapping — 415 mynas were removed from the Hawkesbury in January. The efforts of Geoff Wynn, the Windsor Area Coordinator, and 10 year old, Bradley Johnson of Pitt Town, warrant special mention: Bradley spent his holidays talking to people about mynas and riding his bike around checking on traps and finding new spots for them.



The **Lane Cove** program being facilitated by Eliza Salt of the Council is now well underway after a trap building workshop at the end of November. Around twenty people from the community attended and build 15 traps. Eliza reports that the community is reporting success with trapping mynas and sharing their tips. Another trap building demonstration was held in Lane Cove last month with a good turn out and a further 40 people added to the mailing list. The new Lane Cove program also featured in an article in the North Shore Times which has generated many enquiries from the public both within the Lane Cove local government area and from other municipalities.

Murrumbateman Landcare Group has continued the trial of trap types for rural residential and vineyard sites that have low density myna populations. Over the past few months a number of interested landholders have requested traps and decoy birds and the trapping program has continued with captures of between 2-6 birds per trap, per property – this is the typical trapping rates so far on rural residential and small farms. In the upcoming weeks, as grapes ripen in the vineyards, there will be a more concerted effort to trap in targeted sites. A single trapper in the Merryville Estate outside Murrumbateman has surprised everyone by trapping nearly 80 mynas and 17 starlings in an area away from the commercial vineyards.

Tien Pham, of the **Mid North NSW Coast** project (covering the three regions of Coffs, Bellingen & Nambucca), reports good responses from the community to the program. Currently she is holding a series of public information sessions across the 3 regions, which hopefully will instill further enthusiasm for community action.

Orange: Cilla Kinross of Charles Sturt University has mentioned that they are in the process of establishing a control program out at Orange to try to eradicate their (so far, quite small) numbers of mynas in Orange. We wish them all the best as it would be a real shame if mynas established themselves out as far west as Orange.

Wingecarribee: the Bowral Community Men's Shed has been churning out the traps. They have now produced 60 traps for residents within and outside Wingecarribee Shire. Tracey Poulter from the Council reports that some 1312 mynas and 105 starlings have now been trapped in the area.

Eurobodalla's Indian Myna Control Program volunteer coordinators and trappers have had encouraging initial results in the first 5 months of trapping, with over 200 Indian Mynas caught. There are currently 23 coordinators monitoring the 55 traps that



are in use. The Batemans Bay Men's Shed continues making traps for enthusiastic community trappers.

Many of the coordinators, trappers and a Batemans Bay Men's Shed member recently met to share experiences to ensure the program goes from strength to strength. The Eurobodalla Council is very active in support of the program: it has approached every nursery and produce store to promote educational material to their customers. In addition, Council is providing the media with regular updates of the program to increase community participation. The dynamos in the council driving this are Courtney Fink-Downes and David Cass. In the coming months, many of the Volunteer Coordinators will undertake letterbox drops in the Indian Myna 'hotspot' areas, talk with local schools and continue to raise the profile of the control program. A lot of



Clive Cohen receives his Batemans Bay Men's Shed trap from David Cass

Canberrans have holiday places on the Eurobodalla coast so if you want to join the program when you are down there, just contact Courtney on 02 4474 7442.

The Tweed

Pam Gray from the Tweed Shire Council reports all is going well up there with the Tweed / Byron project. They are now up to 1950 mynas trapped. The community up there is still very inspired to work on the project. The northern rivers now has an Action Plan, that was collaboratively developed between Tweed and Byron, Lismore, Ballina, Richmond and Clarence Valley Councils, the Dept of Lands, the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, Forests NSW, NSW Dept of Environment and Climate Change, the Southern Cross University and Granite Borders, Richmond, and Kyogle LandCare groups.

Hornsby: Peter Franklin and I gave a presentation and trap building demonstration last Saturday at Thornleigh in Sydney, that was organised by Danielle Sutton of the Hornsby Council. A highly enthusiastic crowd of 90 attended the presentation, while 35 stayed on for the trap building demo. Lots of questions and, hopefully sensible, answers. With this as a core group, we can see the Hornsby Indian Myna action program taking off in a big way. Our thanks to Danielle and Anthony Newlings from the Hornsby Council for inviting us up there. The local Men's Shed had a number of traps there for sale that were quickly snapped up, as was the one that Peter and I made in the demo.

Macedon Ranges

Things are starting to now move in Victoria. Courtney Fink-Downes (yes, she from Eurobodalla) and her father, Ron, who lives in the Macedon Ranges area in Victoria, gave a presentation to senior members of the Macedon Ranges Shire's environment team late last year. So impressed were they with the data and information presented that the Shire has now decided to include funding in their forward budget estimates for a myna reduction program. This will be along the lines of how Eurobodalla is doing it: the so-called "Shoalhaven Model" of integrated local government / community action that is now the model for many communities and councils in NSW. The cages will be constructed by the Kyneton Men's Shed with town-based Coordinators. There is every expectation the program will be in full swing by spring 2010. Well done Courtney and Ron for getting this happening in Victoria. Let's hope this will activate other councils in that State.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne (RBGC) in Victoria

The wonderful Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne, at the top end of the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, has commenced a 12 month Indian Myna trapping trial, as this pest species has been identified as a potential threat to the biodiversity of the site. Not only does the RBGC have an absolutely brilliant area of planted native gardens – it definitely rivals (even exceeds) the National Botanic Gardens here in Canberra – but it has some 360

hectares of almost pristine heath-lands, wetlands and woodlands that are home to thriving bird and animal life, including several rare endangered species. The trial involves:

- 12 months of trapping with a Myna Magnet trap at a fixed location
- monitoring of the trap with a motion-sensing infrared camera
- weekly birds surveys at the trap site and other set locations.

If you haven't been down to the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne put it on the itinerary for your next visit to Victoria. In fact make a special visit just for this: it is brilliant.