

Around the Traps — Oct 2009

The Hawkesbury region

A community meeting in October at Richmond organized by Garry Baldry & Martin Gauci of the Hawkesbury City Council was a huge success with over a hundred people attending. A community-action program with groups in each village and town is being formed. Coordinators for these groups across the shire are being identified. Contact Martin or Garry at the Hawkesbury Shire Council if you want to get involved.

Wingecarribee region

Things are going well in the Moss Vale / Mittagong / Bowral area. Tracey Poulter says that the Bowral Men's Shed has now produced 50 traps and 1057 mynas have been caught in the Wingecarribee area.

Coffs Harbour / Belligen / Nambucca

Myna control is also going well up around Coffs Harbour / Belligen and Nambucca. Ron Smith reports that numbers in the Coffs area still remain low after earlier trapping activity.

The Project Officer, Tien Pham, reports that much progress has been made in the battle against the Indian Myna invasion. The community awareness strategy is in place with the development of an education resource pack comprising information brochures, posters, and Myna Control handbook. Free information workshops were held in early August across the three participating local government areas, and were well attended by the community. This helped to boost volunteer participation in activities such as myna surveying, trapping and trap building.

During the project period over 60 volunteers were engaged to actively trap myna birds. To date, these volunteers have trapped 235 mynas throughout the project area. This number is expected to rise as the Project Officer continues to engage community groups such as bird watchers, schools and local industry associations.

The Project Officer is currently working on establishing a website which should be up and running by early October. This will provide the community with access to the latest news on Indian mynas, project activities and useful links to other sources of information. Other activities include coordinating a long-term myna survey to collect baseline data, and assessing the viability of a shooting programme to complement trapping activities. The community can also look forward to a second round of information workshops early next year.

Contact the Indian Myna Project Officer, Tien Pham on 0438 218 261 to participate in a great community project.

Eurobodalla region

Courtney Fink-Downes of Eurobodalla Shire Council advises that the Bateman Bay's Men's Shed is making traps, and the 23 Community Coordinators for the 21 villages and towns across the Shire are being very active with community meetings, and local trapping with 35 traps is underway. Courtney is about to take the word to Mt Macedon in Victoria. She is going down there in November to speak to the environmental officer at the Macedon Ranges Shire Council to encourage them to support a community Indian Myna Control Program. Good luck, Courtney. Now with things happening in NSW, we need to encourage the Victorians to start activity.

Blacktown

The Blacktown City Council reports that things are on the move up there. Following the trapping trials, research continued with Dr Ricky Spencer of the University of Western Sydney. A report on the next round of research is scheduled to go to Council for consideration in the near future. The Council has a trap hire program under development.

By all accounts the community is very enthusiastic about participating in a trapping program.

The Shoalhaven

The Shoalhaven activity continues. Max Smith advises that they have 300 traps out and about, and they estimate that they caught 1200 mynas over the past year. The Bendigo Bank generously donated \$1000 to the Shoalhaven community groups and they have put that all into local advertising. One of their trappers, Rod Simpson, has now caught 205.

Central West Indian Myna Control Group - Mudgee area

John McCrea of the Central West Indian Myna Control Group around Mudgee advises that they have resumed trapping at Dunedoo after a winter recess — Currawongs had begun to dominate the traps over winter so they held off trapping. The Currawongs have now mostly moved on (isn't that a pleasant thought) so they have their traps out again. They catch more starlings than mynas – but then again they have more starlings than mynas (10:1). Wineries in the Mudgee area have contacted John to learn how to rid their vineyards of both starlings and mynas.