

What is being done to control Indian Mynas in Canberra?

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc. has developed a number of strategies to tackle these introduced pests.

These include:

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

The trapping program – endorsed by the RSPCA and the ACT Government – has been successful in removing over 16,000 mynas from around Canberra gardens in just two years.

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.

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc. is also working on strategies to reduce Indian Myna numbers in horse paddocks and nature reserves, as well as urban areas including shopping centres and schools where large numbers of mynas forage and roost.

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 has the aim of protecting 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:

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'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.

CIMAG0608

Indian Myna

the
flying cane toad



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



Why is the Indian Myna such a problem?

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

Indian Mynas arrived in Canberra in 1968, when a misguided person released some birds he bought from Sydney because he missed hearing their call.

It is now estimated that there are some 250 Indian Mynas per square kilometre in the urban area of Canberra.

This is a 150,000 feral population, out-competing our native birds and arboreal mammals for nesting sites, preying on eggs, chicks and mammal young.

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 two broods of young every year, and spend their nights in noisy communal roosts.

Indian mynas can create fire risks in buildings through making large scrappy nests in roofs from sticks and any available rubbish they find.

They also hang around restaurants and cafes, walking all over tables in search of scraps of food. 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. They have been introduced into South Africa, North America, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

Indian Mynas were brought into Melbourne market gardens in the 1860s to keep down insects. They were then taken to Cairns and other places in far north Queensland to control insects in cane fields. They failed to control insect pests!

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.

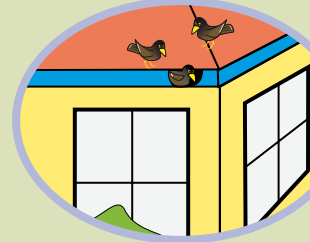
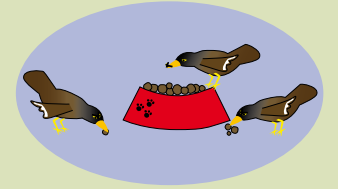
What can I do about them?

You can help by taking the following steps to limit food and nesting sites:



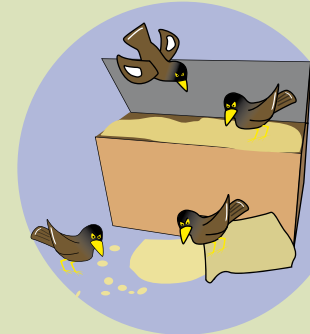
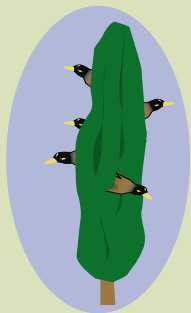
Don't feed them. Clear away food scraps when eating outdoors.

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.