

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc.



Myna Matters Bulletin # 5

Dear CIMAG Members and Friends

We continue to make good progress in our efforts to protect our native wildlife from the impact of Indian Mynas in this region.

CIMAG now CIMAG Inc

The Group is now an incorporated association. Hence the change in title. There are a number of benefits to being an incorporated association, not least is that we are now a legal entity and will be able to receive grants from government, should we make an application in the future to help support us in implementing the CIMAG Strategy. Incorporation also places a number of obligations on the Committee: these include providing an annual report to members and holding an annual general meeting. More of that later down the track.

The RSPCA's Euthanising Service

A number of our members are taking advantage of the free euthanising service being offered to us by the RSPCA out at the Weston Centre on Kirkpatrick Street. . We wish to encourage CIMAG trappers to take advantage of this generous offer. While the RSPCA has agreed to do this *gratis*, it would be a good gesture on our part if people taking mynas and starlings out there could give a gold coin donation to help defray the RSPCA's costs and to show our support for the work of the RSPCA generally.

As I mentioned last Bulletin, for practical reasons, the RSPCA Centre at Weston needs to limit the time when it can accept trapped birds or bodies to the following:

Monday:	10:00am – 11:00am
	4:30pm – 5:30pm
Wednesday:	4:30pm – 5:30pm
Friday:	4:30pm – 5:30pm.

Please take the trapped mynas / starlings to Building A, the Wildlife Building at the RSPCA Centre in Weston — it is the very first building in the RSPCA complex as you come down Kirkpatrick Street. If bringing dead mynas and starlings to the Centre for disposal, could you please use an opaque bag or box in view of possible sensitivity of some members of the public to dead birds.

CIMAG Monitoring Mynas Program

As our objective is to protect our native wildlife from the threat posed by the Indian Myna, a program of monitoring native birds and Indian Myna numbers in backyards and the local area is needed. This will enable us to assess whether our trapping activity is significantly reducing myna numbers and resulting in a return of native birds to our gardens.

Environment ACT has also encouraged us to establish such a program as it will also help them to determine the usefulness of a trapping program, and whether in the future they should complement our backyard effort by undertaking their own activity in public areas (nature reserves and open space).

In line with this CIMAG is looking to partner with the Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) — the local birding group — to monitor the change in native and feral bird populations. COG has a long-standing monitoring program via their Garden Bird Survey (GBS) sheets where COG members record the maximum number of birds of a species they observe at a time within 100 metres of their house during each week. It has been a great success and records run back decades.

I would like to encourage CIMAG members to join in this monitoring program. For those who know their native birds, it would be excellent if you undertook to cover the full spectrum of birds — native and exotic. For those of you who are not confident in being able to identify native birds, a focus on mynas and starlings would be very helpful.

The Committee would like to encourage you to participate in this survey activity: it is a major part of the strategy to assess the impact of mynas on our native bird population — and most of us are involved in this activity because we are concerned about the decline in native birds in our backyards and local neighbourhoods.

Please feel free to contact me (handke@grapevine.net.au or by phone 6231 7461) if you want to hear more about what is involved in the Garden Bird Survey activity and to get hold of a GBS sheet.

CIMAG Website

We are fortunate that David Cook, the website manager for the Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) has agreed to help develop our own website. It is hoped to be up and running in a few weeks. I will let you know in the next Bulletin the name of the site. You can see David's skills at work if you go the COG website: <http://canberrabirds.org.au/>

Ian Fraser's article on mynas

Occasionally each of us will run into people / friends who need convincing that our effort to reduce Indian Myna numbers is important. Ian Fraser, the eminent local naturalist (and CIMAG Committee member) has an excellent article in the recent edition of Gang Gang, the COG newsletter, that presents the argument tactfully and cogently. It is worth a read — go to the COG website (<http://canberrabirds.org.au/> and then to September issue of the Gang Gang newsletter. The item is towards the back titled "*AvIan Whimsy #45 — With extreme prejudice*". Use it to convince any doubters!

CIMAG membership growing strongly — and widely

The membership of CIMAG continues to grow strongly as people in the Canberra and Queanbeyan region hear of our efforts. We now have just over 200 people on our membership / contact list with some 106 members with traps. We have also been fielding interest from people interstate who wish to be involved or to set up similar community-based groups in their areas. Our strategy is to help groups get started elsewhere, so we have been providing information to help them get a group going in their region.

August trapping data

The trapping data for August has now been collated. A further **841 mynas were removed** from the ACT environment by 48 CIMAG members in August, bringing the **progressive**

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total to 4446. Many trappers have reported a quiet month in myna activity in their areas, resulting in not all CIMAG trappers setting their traps.

The capture data across Canberra suburbs follows.

Suburb	August Mynas	Aggregate Mynas
Aranda	43	219
Campbell	29	36
Chapman	12	29
Chifley	4	19
Deakin	6	24
Duffy	-	240
Fadden	41	45
Farrer	21	21
Fisher	-	16
Florey	-	6
Flynn	5	19
Garran	29	169
Giralang	14	14
Gordon	5	5
Hall	3	565
Hughes	8	49
Isaacs	7	15
Kambah	223	2201
Lyneham	5	17
Lyons	48	64
Macarthur	-	8
Melba	3	3
Monash	9	9
Narrabundah	17	23
Pearce	44	126
Stirling	12	12
Theodore	68	108
Wanniassa	-	38
Waramanga	82	137
Watson	56	64
Weston	15	103
Yarralumla	<u>32</u>	<u>32</u>
Total	841	4446

The Publicity Front

We have had some good publicity in the past few weeks and will be focusing on this in the period ahead, together with developing our education / information material.

Bill Handke
President
CIMAG

14 September 2006