

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock



President's 2010-11 Report

It is my pleasure to present the 2010-11 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

This past year has been a steady year for CIMAG.

I would like to first recognize the work of the CIMAG Committee: Bruce Lindenmayer, Peter Franklin, Anne l'ons, Greg Flowers, Rosemary Blemings, Marg Peachey, Alison Russell-French, Peter Ormay and Megan van der Velde for their work on behalf of the group over the past year. I also wish to record our appreciation for the support and work of our Patron, Prof Tony Peacock. I must also acknowledge Graham Gliddon for the many hours of work he continues to do each month in collating the capture data, and David Cook for maintaining the CIMAG website and chatlines.

The achievements of the Group in tackling Indian Mynas in our region are due to the efforts of CIMAG members. It is their efforts in spreading the word about the threat posed to our wildlife by mynas and in trapping which have been the reason for our collective success. So a big thankyou to all our members.

2010-11 can again be regarded as a successful year. But it has not been a year in which we have made major strides in the Canberra region because of some difficulties that we will need to work on in the current year. While things have been steady here, the anti-myna program more widely has been highly successful. Many new groups were formed and there was much more interest by Victorians and Queenslanders in doing something about mynas. Also, 2010-11 saw the launch of MynaScan by Peter West of the Invasive Animals Collaborative Research Centre, and Peter Bird of SA Biosecurity Dept continued the campaign to stop Victorian mynas moving westward into South Australia. The local councils and communities that have set up control activities reported good Indian Mynas capture numbers.

A number of activities of the past year are worth specifically mentioning.

We continued the **public education and awareness raising** effort during 2010-11. CIMAG does this in a number of ways:

- through interviews and media coverage - here we need to thank Tony Peacock for mentioning us in his Feral Hour with Alex Sloane on ABC 666, and Merylyn Condon in her 2CA Gardening Gurus gardening program. The item on the local ABC TV Stateline Program earlier this year had multiple runs on ABC 24 and raised the profile of the myna-control program across Australia: this brought many requests for information and traps from people interstate.
- presentations to community groups and at conferences. Foremost amongst these were presentations to the 15th Australian Vertebrate Pest Conference, to the NSW CWA Agricultural/Environmental Conference and the Ballarat Myna Control Workshop. As well, we also gave presentations to community groups in Canberra and at the launch of the Wollongong program.
- through brochures and pamphlets. These were well-received. The photo sheet of "Canberra's Native Backyard Birds and the Introduced Pest Birds" have been a particular winner, and is a great education tool for children to learn about our native birds and what we are seeking to protect.
- Through the CIMAG website (www.indianmynaaction.org.au). For the first time we have passed ¼ million website hits – some 239,390 hits with some 20,259 unique visitors.

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Providing support for myna control activities elsewhere has taken up a lot of time over the past year. Our success has been an inspiration to other groups and individuals across NSW and to a lesser extent Victoria and Queensland. While this is good to see, it does mean that we field a lot of phone calls and emails from people interstate on how they can manage mynas in their area.

The **trapping effort** continues across Canberra and our district. There are a couple of aspects worth mentioning:

- over the past year capture rates slowed: we put this down to trappers having removed most of the naïve, easily trappable mynas in their areas, leaving the wary; the slow provision of new traps in new areas – new traps in new areas always produce high capture levels for a period; and the lack of mynas – this last one is not a bad thing.
- as at June 2011, Graham Gliddon had records of 37,719 mynas removed since CIMAG started with 5,500 removed in 2010-11. A reminder to trappers to respond to Graham's monthly request for capture info – even if it is a zero – to enable us to keep reasonably accurate statistics.
- a disappointment has been the slowdown in trap building at the Alexander Maconochie Centre. This has meant that we have not been able to provide local people with traps in a timely manner. As such the waiting list grows – now over 150 people – and the time to provide a trap to people on the list is quite some months. Moreover the plans for the goal to make flat-pack versions of the PeeGees trap for interstate people has not as yet resulted in any being made up. We will take these matters up with the authorities in an endeavor to re-invigorate what has been an excellent partnership between CIMAG, the ACT Government and the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

We **supported good science and research** through our assistance to Kate Grarock for her PhD research project on mynas. Her project will provide some valuable insights into the efficacy of our myna control activities. Thanks to all those skilled bird observers who helped Kate by doing bird surveys over the three years. The five non-trapping control suburbs that were part of her project – Red Hill, Chapman, O'Connor, Campbell and Bonython – are now open for trapping. We are giving people who want traps in those suburbs priority to try to reduce the growth in myna populations that occurred there and in the adjacent reserves over the three "non-trapping" years.

As always we wish to ensure that our activities are ethically based: in this regard we continued to **emphasize** that **animal welfare** must continue to be at the forefront of our trappers' consciousness. Our public credibility and acceptance relies on CIMAG operating in line with public values. Accordingly, we ask members to abide by sound animal welfare practices. If members pass their trap onto others, it is important that they are also told of the requirements for sound animal welfare practices and to sign the Protocol on Animal Welfare which can be found on our website.

The **membership of CIMAG continues to grow** strongly. With just on 1300 members and with around 1000 members who have been trapping at some stage, CIMAG has become a major community-action group in the ACT.

A big issue for CIMAG in this coming year will be the growing incidence of trap wariness of mynas.

In conclusion I would like to thank all our members for their continuing efforts. We look forward to your further efforts in tackling this significant pest.

Bill Handke
President
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