

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock



President's 2011-12 Report

It is my pleasure to present the 2011-12 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

Another steady year has passed for CIMAG.

I would like to first recognize the work of the CIMAG Committee: Marg Peachey, Megan van der Velde, Anne l'ons, Bruce Lindenmayer, Greg Flowers, Rosemary Blemings, Ray Barge, Alison Russell-French, and Peter Ormay 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.

2011-12 can again be regarded as a successful year. The program continues to receive widespread public support in the region and support from the ACT Government, the RSPCA, the Australian National University, and the Invasive Animals Collaborative Research Centre. A good number of people from the Canberra and Queanbeyan district – around 140 - joined the group over the past year, adding to the strength of the movement. Moreover, through their trapping efforts they have helped to reduce further the presence of mynas in our region.

Our focus over the past year has again been to build the program in our region but also to help spread the effort across eastern Australia. 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. 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 2011-12. 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 for pushing the message when he was interviewed on the Project on Channel 10, and Merylyn Condon in her 2CA Gardening Gurus gardening program. Our activities were also featured on two TV items: the ABC's Stateline Program and A Current Affair.
- presentations to community groups and at conferences. A significant presentation was to the Cairns Rotary Group back in Sept 2011 which directly lead to the creation of the Cairns Rotary Indian Myna Society which is having great success in reducing myna numbers up in Cairns.
- 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

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- protect. We must thank Rosemary Blemings and her colleagues for spreading the word at last year's Floriade (and again in 2012) by distributing brochures and speaking to visitors about mynas and what they can do about them. The brochures were a great hit.
- through the CIMAG website (www.indianmynaaction.org.au).

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; and the lack of mynas – this last one is not a bad thing.
- new traps in new areas always produce high capture levels for a period, so it remains vital that we keep recruiting new trappers in new areas of the Canberra / Queanbeyan district.
- as at June 2012, Graham Gliddon had records of 42,342 mynas removed since CIMAG started with 4,181 removed in 2011-12. 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 accurate statistics.
- the Canberra Ornithologists Group Garden Bird Survey indicates that mynas are the 14th most common bird in Canberra and their aggregate numbers are still declining. While numbers overall are still declining overall, in the past three years the numbers seemed to have stabilized around the 13-14th most common bird: this is most satisfying for those interested in reducing the impact of mynas on our native wildlife, remembering that they were the 3rd most common bird some 6 years ago before we started the program.
- the Alexander Maconochie Centre cranked up their trap making effort in the first half of 2012, after a lull last year. This has meant that we have been able to provide local people with traps in a timely manner. So a big thankyou to the inmates and staff out at "the Mac".

We continued to **support good science and research** by providing help to PhD research projects on mynas. In this regard, there are 4 PhD research projects – researchers based at ANU, Newcastle and Orange – currently underway that CIMAG has been supporting. Generally this is through allowing them access to our capture database, helping with fieldwork monitoring, and providing nestboxes and other materials. The flurry of research is very valuable, as can be seen from the findings of Kate Garrock that mynas have had a deleterious impact on the numbers of a number of native birds in Canberra. Daryl King has been adding to this knowledge with his independent research on myna activity in Belconnen suburbs.

An initiative in 2011-12 was **nestbox monitoring** during last year's breeding season in the 14 nature reserves adjacent to suburbs that Kate Garrock used for her field work for her PhD project. This involved a number of CIMAG members regularly checking the nesting boxes to see if mynas had taken them over and, if so, removing the pest birds. A delight was to see that so many of the boxes were being used by native birds – mostly rosellas – but also Owlet Nightjars. Our thanks to Kumiko, Victoria, Kathy, Noel, Marg and Peter – the nestbox monitors.

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

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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 1390 members and with around 1100 members who have been trapping at some stage, CIMAG has become a major community-action group in the ACT.

While myna numbers continue to decline – albeit only slowly now – we must not get complacent that the task is largely done. We can be sure of one thing. If we don't continue the effort of reducing the opportunities for mynas to feed and breed, and if we lessen the culling effort we can anticipate a rapid rise in myna numbers.

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
12 Oct 2012

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Treasurer's 2011-12 Report

The audited Financial Statement for 2011-12 has been circulated to members and again indicates that the finances of the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group for the 2011-12 financial year have been tight. The organization has had to operate in a frugal manner given that our revenue – tied to donations provided when traps are given out to people – has been constrained by a reduced number of traps made in the Alexander Maconochie Centre over 2011-12.

Nonetheless, CIMAG has been fortunate that funds in the bank from past donations have been sufficient to allow us to undertake all the activities that we planned for the year.

In view of this financial constraint, the CIMAG Committee earlier resolved to apply for funding grants with the federal and ACT governments. Three grants have been approved and will enable us to finance our activities to a higher level in 2012-13.

Anne l'Ons
Treasurer

12 Oct 2012