

# Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock



## President's 2012-13 Report

It is my pleasure to present the 2012-13 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

2012-13 was another big year for myna control in the ACT and for CIMAG.

I would like to first recognize the work of the CIMAG Committee: Marg Peachey, Anne l'ons, Rosemary Blemings, Megan van der Velde, Bruce Lindenmayer, Greg Flowers, Ray Barge, Ross Dalton and Andy Fuller 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. A very special thank you must go to Anne l'Ons: Anne has been the Treasurer for CIMAG since we started. Anne has had to give up the job, so I wish to record our great appreciation for all she has done for us for the past 7 years.

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.

2012-13 was a successful year for us. The program continues to receive widespread public support in the region and support from the ACT and federal Governments, the RSPCA, the Australian National University, and the Invasive Animals Collaborative Research Centre. Both the ACT and federal governments provided funding to CIMAG in 2012-13 which has been most welcome and has enabled us to continue our promotional work on myna control and to fund materials for trap building. We are most grateful to both governments for their support.

A good number of people from the Canberra and Queanbeyan district – 120 – 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.

There were 3 big events that mark the past year as a big one for CIMAG. Firstly we were involved in filming a new ABC TV program on Australian birds with William McInnes which will start to be shown late November. Thanks to the CIMAG members who participated, especially to Jennifer Cleary and Ted Fleming, and Kumiko Callaway and her children.

The second big event was the 2013 Indian Myna Conference which we organized and held in June 2013 at the CSIRO Discovery Centre. This was a great event, with Minister Rattenbury opening the Conference, excellent speakers and 100 delegates. Speakers included Susana Saavedra from the Canary Island – a great hit – and Prof Andrea Griffin and Marie Diquelou from Newcastle University. Kate Garrock presented her findings from her PhD research – a number of CIMAG members helped her with her field surveys.

The third big event was the winning of the ACT Keep Australia Beautiful Award: in fact 3 Awards. The national winner will be announced on 18 November. It may well be CIMAG!

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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 2012-13. CIMAG does this in a number of ways:

- through interviews and media coverage
- presentations to community groups and at conferences.
- through brochures and pamphlets. These were well-received. We must thank the ACT and federal governments for providing grant funds to enable us to update the brochures and Fact Sheet. And wish to thank Rosemary Blemings and her colleagues for spreading the word at Floriade and at other community events. The brochures were a great hit with the public and we received a lot of follow up.
- through the CIMAG website ([www.indianmynaaction.org.au](http://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 easily trappable mynas in their areas; myna trap wariness; 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 2013, Graham Gliddon had records of 46,143 mynas removed since CIMAG started with 3,549 removed in 2012-13. 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 20<sup>th</sup> most common bird in Canberra and their aggregate numbers are still declining. Numbers overall are still declining: this is most satisfying for those interested in reducing the impact of mynas on our native wildlife, remembering that they were the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common bird some 7 years ago before we started the program.
- the Alexander Maconochie Centre produced its 700<sup>th</sup> trap. So a big thankyou to the inmates and staff out at "the Mac".

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.

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The **membership of CIMAG continues to grow** strongly. With just on 1522 members and with around 1400 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  
3 Nov 2013

