

# Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock

*National 2013 “Keep Australia Beautiful” Award Winner  
for  
Environmental Innovation & Protection*



## President's 2013-14 Report

It is my pleasure to present the 2013-14 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

2013-14 was another solid year for myna control in the ACT and for CIMAG.

I would like to first recognize the work of the CIMAG Committee: Marg Peachey, Rosemary Blemings, Bruce Lindenmayer, Greg Flowers, Peter Ormay, Ray Barge, Ross Dalton, Andy Fuller, Nick Hall and Thea Reiman 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 “thankyou” goes to Rosemary Blemings who has been involved on the Committee since we started in 2006 but has now decided not to stand for Committee re-election for the forthcoming year. I wish to record our great appreciation for all she has done for us for the past 8 years. Thankfully Rosemary will still spread the message about myna control through the many other organisations that she is a member of and at Floriade.

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.

2013-14 can be regarded as another 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.

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 a few events that mark the past year as a big one for CIMAG. Firstly, CIMAG was the National Winner of the Keep Australia Beautiful Award for Environmental Protection and Innovation. Vice President Bruce Lindenmayer and I had the pleasure of representing CIMAG at the awards in Perth last November. Secondly, we were invited to present to the Australian Vertebrate Pest Conference in Brisbane in May, which again gave us the opportunity to spread the word about the success story of Canberra's CIMAG trappers to an influential national audience of government officers and researchers, and thirdly, Bruce and I participated in a Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions Workshop to consider the “Factors Required for Effective Invasive Bird Control”. It involved senior academics from Universities around Australia plus Peter West of the Invasive Animals Collaborative Research Centre and Peter Bird from the SA Biosecurity Dept.

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On top of that, the President – really representing all CIMAG members – was named the ACT and Region Conservation Council's Environmentalist of the Year.

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 2013-14. CIMAG does this in a number of ways:

- through interviews and media coverage
- presentations to community groups and at conferences, and at "community festivals" such as the Community ParkCare Exhibition at Jamison
- 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:

- our monthly reported captures have reached 49,614 Mynas and 7,789 Starlings mynas since we started: what a great success story.
- 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.
- as at June 2014, Graham Gliddon had records of 3,338 removed in 2013-14. 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 18th 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 8 years ago before we started the program.
- the Alexander Maconochie Centre continues to produce well-made traps. 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

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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 1760 people who have been members and with around 1500 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 Nov 2014

