

# Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock

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



## President's 2014-15 Report

The following is the 2014-15 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

2014-15 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: Bruce Lindenmayer, Ross Dalton, Andy Fuller, Greg Flowers, Peter Oram, Ray Barge, Nick Hall 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, Ryu Callaway for managing the Membership Database and David Cook for maintaining the CIMAG website and chatlines.

The achievements of the Group 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.

2014-15 can be regarded as another successful year for us, although it comes with some worries and possible looming difficulties. 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. But trap wariness is on the increase and mynas are also moving out into the nature reserves and peri-urban areas.

A good number of people from the Canberra and Queanbeyan district – 148 – 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. What this does mean though is that mynas are still with us, perhaps still in bigish numbers in some places, as people are joining the group because of their presence.

In previous years we have been able to point to a number of significant events to reflect the success of the group: not so much this past year. While things have been steady here, the anti-myna program more widely has been highly successful. Many new groups were formed, many with our direct support, and there was much more interest by Victorians and Queenslanders in doing something about mynas.

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

We continued the **public education and awareness raising** effort during 2014-15. CIMAG does this in a number of ways:

- through radio and TV interviews and media coverage
- presentations to community groups, 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 we 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)): 185,000 hits in 2014-15.

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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 now to a greater extent in Victoria and Queensland.

The **trapping effort** continues across the Canberra district. Aspects worth mentioning are:

- our monthly reported captures have reached 53,478 Mynas and 8,152 Starlings since we started: what a great success story.
- over the past years, capture rates have slowed compared to the early years: 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. Perhaps complacency, boredom and other-things-to-do may have also played a part!
- as at June 2015, Graham Gliddon had records of 3,839 removed in 2014-15 (this was actually 500 more than the previous year). 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 now down to the 19th most common bird in Canberra (18<sup>th</sup> the previous survey year). However, the Survey for 2013-14 worryingly showed that there has been a small kick-up in the numbers of mynas being observed. This coincides with anecdotal reports and casual observations when driving around Canberra. Even more worrying is that mynas are being observed away from the suburbs - in nature reserves and in peri-urban areas. Notwithstanding the observed increase in mynas, it is still most satisfying to reflect that mynas were the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common bird 9 years ago when we started the program.
- the Alexander Maconochie Centre continues to produce well-made traps. So thanks go to the inmates and staff out at "the Mac". These industrious guys are now nearing their 1000<sup>th</sup> trap.

The **Nest Removal Project** was a success with Adrian Gallman, with the able support from Greg Flowers (and few others) removed 64 nests, 114 chicks and 52 eggs myna nests in tree hollows areas in public areas during the 2014-15 breeding season. The chicks were sent to the Australian Museum in Sydney for Dr Richard Major's research project on Myna DNA.

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 told of the requirements for sound animal welfare practices and sign the Protocol on Animal Welfare which is on our website.

The **membership of CIMAG continues to grow** strongly. Graham Gliddon has records of 1822 people having been involved in trapping at some time over the past 9 years.

The small increase in observed numbers of mynas is a timely reminder that we must not get complacent. 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  
5 Nov 2015