

Coffs Harbour LGA Myna Trapping Program

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Our program to reduce Indian Mynas in the Coffs Harbour local government area over the past few years has been progressing well. There is good control of the pests in most of the area and there are only a few locations where larger numbers of birds remain — and this is only because there have not been traps to work the area. More traps are being made each week and soon it is expected that there will be sufficient traps to control myna populations in all parts of the LGA.

The Indian Myna control program is being managed by the Ulitarra Conservation Society Inc and Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Inc, with some financial support from Coffs Harbour City Council. The Council funds the purchase of trap-making material, CO2 regulators, gas refills and the rent on gas bottles. The total of Council financial support amounts to about \$1 200 per year.



The program is promoted by volunteers at fairs, markets, field days etc, and by media releases which are often assisted by Council. Council also assists with processing reports of mynas and persons requiring a trap.

An expanded program with Bellingen and Nambucca Landcare networks has just commenced, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust. The combined program now employs a manager for three days per week to expand and increase the effectiveness of the program in the three LGAs. Bi-annual meetings with all other vertebrate pest managers are being held.

What have we learned

We have learnt a number of valuable lessons from our experience:

- having people collect a trap and take home to use is usually not successful. A much better result is achieved by taking a trap to would-be trappers and showing them where to put it and how to use it
- up here, mynas are much harder to trap in the winter months and non-target species are a bigger problem. We now warn new winter trappers of this to avoid disappointment and loss of interest
- the use of decoy birds leads to much quicker and more effective results. This in turn leads to happy and successful long term trappers
- well made and well maintained traps are more successful. Crudely made traps lead to disappointment and even injury to people and bird.
- the type of dry dog food placed in the trap is very important. There are many types of food that the birds will eat but not go into the trap to get. We currently use Lucky Dog "minis".



Where to from here.

We now have a more regional approach with the funding of a program manager for the three LGAs.

We all need to make every effort to assist and support each other to become more effective.

Mynas are a very mobile pest so none of us will ever be completely effective in isolation: a truly national approach is the ultimate aim.