

Around the Traps — Sept 2011

Some really great developments are happening on the myna-control front elsewhere in Australia. Read on about the efforts of other groups.

The **Clarence Valley Conservation in Action (CVCIA)** group in northern NSW is working up a good myna control program involving the local Juvenile Justice Centre, Envite and a volunteer from Volunteering Clarence Valley in trap building, with support / sponsorship from the Clarence Valley Council, the NSW NPWS and Clarence Landcare. They have recently started stalls at local markets as a way of getting their message out to the community. They passed their 1,000 trapped myna back in July and have a small dedicated group on the case up there under the co-ordination of Laura Noble. See their website (www.cvcia.org.au) for more info.



CVCIA activists Paul, Kevin and Pam at the Maclean markets selling the myna control message

Tweed and Byron Shire Council's myna control program is now well established with well structured, well managed and very effective activities: over 4,500 mynas have been removed since the program started. The myna control program looks to expand its approach to conservation management up there with funding for a broader program of activities that will tackle mynas, cane toads, rabbits, foxes etc. Pam Gray, the Project Leader, says the aim is to support the restoration and rehabilitation of urban and peri urban bushland in the district. Hopefully the new funding comes through for that.

Paul Formosa of the **Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program** indicates that the program continues to attract new participants. They now have a total of 330 registrations since they began earlier this year. This is absolutely marvelous and shows how the community has gotten right behind the program. Last weekend they ran their 16th workshop at which they provided information about the programs objectives. The Corrimal Community Men's Shed continue to supply traps: they have developed a round version which has proven to be sturdy and quicker to make as it involves minimal cutting – it uses a circular plastic base and top. And they have commenced discussions with the University of Western Sydney's Invasive Species Unit to undertake research into Indian Myna bird population across the Wollongong local government area using MynaScan.



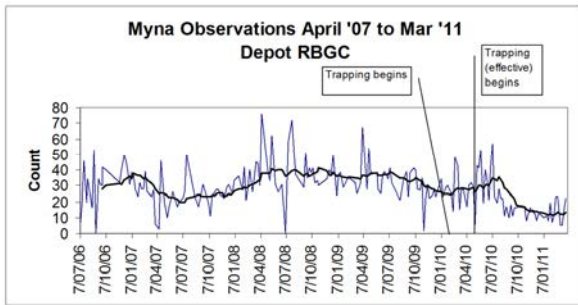
The Corrimal Trap

Byron Kearns, the Land Protection Officer on the **Townsville City Council** mentions that their program of eradicating mynas from Magnetic Island is now complete: the last two crafty ones were done away with by Byron's even craftier plan. It is wonderful news to know that the island is now myna-free. The council is now undertaking a program to educate the folk on the island in identifying and eradicating mynas if they return. Now Byron has turned his attention to the really big task: to rid Townsville itself of the pests.

The **Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne** Victoria continues with its program of myna control with some very positive and encouraging results. David Hunt reports that they have solved their problems with native mammals raiding the PeeGees trap by putting the trap within a floppy top enclosure. The catch since they introduced the PeeGees trap in May last year is 200 but more importantly they have done some analysis on native bird numbers around the depot where they are trapping. While still at an early stage, and the cause cannot be totally certain, myna



Bandicoot-proof enclosure



numbers observed during their weekly transect count have dropped (from 31 per week to 20 per week) and indigenous species richness has correspondingly increased: 25 per week to 35 per week – some 40 native species were observed in the 12 months before trapping and 49 native species have been observed in the 12 months since. They are all great signs that there is something very good happening down

there. If you haven't been to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne, put it on your "must-do" list for next time you are in Victoria. A truly wonderful spot.

Hawkesbury Indian Myna Action Group (HIMAG) powers on. Over the past 12 months HIMAG has had over 500 people express interest in controlling Indian Mynas. They have developed a number of sources for making the PeeGees myna trap. And they are getting a flat pack made up by their correctional services inmates at the John Morony Correctional Complex. In addition, the local Hawkesbury Men's Shed has now made over 140 PeeGee traps, and it is gratifying to hear the feedback on its effectiveness. One of the HIMAG coordinators for Pitt Town, Peter Ryan, mentions that they have worked out an approach to entice the smarter mynas into the trap – by putting a little peanut butter on the dog food. Don't need much, apparently. They also find that it is important to keep the trap washed down between trappings.

Tracey Poulter from Wingecarribee Shire Council says that their capture results up to September 2011 are 2195 Indian Mynas and 108 European Starlings. So good work up there. She has been contacted by people outside their shire for information, so lets hope that comes to something as well. There was also plenty of interest from Wingecarribee residents when Council held their Threatened Species Display in one of the local shopping centres in regards to Indian Mynas and what they can do to control them. The poster that they used gave some prominence to mynas.

Andre Pieterse from Johannesburg, South Africa advises that a tree trapping exercise over there has had some good success. The local authorities erected a tarpaulin over a roosting tree. After a few days the birds were all back. Some toxic gas was then placed under the tarpaulin and managed to remove over 100 birds in one night. I am seeking more information from Andre on how this worked. This seems to be a similar to Chris Tidemann's roosting tree trap concept which had to be abandoned because of structural instability in any sort of breeze.

Murrumbateman Landcare Group is getting their traps out as the ripening season for grapes approaches. They find this is the most effective time of the year as the mynas come in to raid the vineyards: and one which pays big dividends for the vignerons over there. No doubt we will be able to drink their success!