

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Professor Tony Peacock



Myna Matters Bulletin # 26 (Winter 2013)

Dear CIMAG Members and Friends

The following provides an update on myna-control activities around Australia:

Indian Myna Conference – come along: you will learn heaps!

The 2013 Indian Myna Conference being organized by CIMAG is to be held at the CSIRO Discovery Centre, Clunies Ross Street, Canberra on 19th June. The Conference has excellent speakers lined up, including Susana Saavedra Cruz from Spain who single-handedly has eliminated mynas from various Canary Islands and other islands off the coast of Spain and Africa. She has now been engaged by Tahiti to do the same there. Also hear Dr Andrea Griffin from Newcastle University and Kate Garrock from Australian National University talk about their research findings. A big part of the day will be devoted to hearing from councils and community groups and a free-flowing plenary discussion on what works, what doesn't, where to from here. **There will be lots of lessons to learn on this day: and it is all free** (although people will have to pay for their own lunch).



Dr Griffin with Peter Franklin, our former CIMAG Secretary, at her research station in Newcastle

Go onto our website – www.indianmynaaction.org.au – to see the Conference Program and to get the Registration Form.

If coming from interstate, best to get flights and accommodation sorted out now – things are on the boil in Canberra at the moment. Remember that Canberra can be foggy in winter and morning flights in can be problematic, so prudence would suggest you come the night before.

Less than a month to go – so get yourself organized. And please let us know if you are coming.

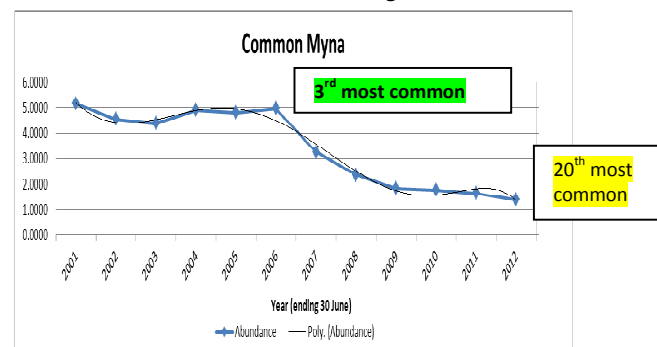
Disaster in Tassie: Mynas have Arrived

Sally Smith of the Tasmanian Dept of Primary Industry, sadly reports that a myna has arrived in Tasmania. A bird was seen on the car ferry from Victoria a few weeks ago and disappeared into Devonport when the ship berthed. We have all been dreading this moment: if there was one, then there may well have been more that have arrived the same way previously. There is an extensive effort to locate and dispose of the bird, but as the sad story with foxes in Tassie attests, this is a very difficult task. The various Tasmanian authorities have acted quickly and together with Glenn Conroy from the Invasive Animals Collaborative Research Centre have sought to help the local community identify the bird. Hopefully we will hear soon that the authorities or the community have been successful in running it to ground – perhaps literally!

But,... Myna Numbers down again here

It is no consolation for the Tassie story, but here in Canberra there has been further good news on the state of myna numbers. The Canberra Ornithologists Garden Bird Survey Report for 2011-12 is now out and declares that mynas are now the 20th most common bird, after being the 3rd most common when we started the trapping program 7 years ago. Let's keep it up.

April saw some good captures: some people have caught around 30 birds, so that sounds like lots of juveniles. And Jim Collins has been having success with the Tiny Tim Drop Door trap for the wary ones.



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Bait – what should we use?

Always a good question. Some of our trappers are reporting some interesting food as bait: Robbie and Mandy report that they had take-away pizza one night, and put the pizza box under the trap. The greasy box not only attracted the birds, but it also kept their surface clean from droppings. We all know that figs are myna favourites, but Trish Burgess reported that she had success with ripe cherries. Lyn Rutherford is using Purina Lucky Dog (Minis Small Breed) – Minced beef, vegetable & pasta flavor with very good results.

Trapping at the new Arboretum

In the weeks before the opening of the new National Arboretum in Canberra, there was a report of a couple of mynas being seen around the new visitors' centre. So we set up a trap in the week before the official opening to hopefully remove them. Alas, they were never seen again, so we had no luck. But the hordes of magpies up there – used to feasting on the workers' lunch scraps (or being fed by them) - were quick to pick up any stray bait.

There have been no further reports of mynas being seen up there, so hopefully they were just passing through.

No luck trapping at the new Arboretum



Around the Traps

Anton, Pam and the Lismore Men's Shed are thinking Big
Anton Nguyen of Lismore City Council and Pam Gray of Tweed Shire Council together with the Lismore Men and Community Shed are thinking BIG.

They have developed a super-sized trap – which we are calling the “Big Lissy” – for use at the waste facility at Lismore and elsewhere around the Northern Rivers region – hopefully to catch very big numbers. The Lismore Men and Community Shed were the ones to build “Big Lissy”. Lismore City Council and Richmond Landcare Inc. will work with others in the community to trial and refine the new trap in an attempt to manage and control Indian Mynas up that way.

Things on the move in Victoria

Various communities and councils in Victoria are developing myna control actions. We reported last Bulletin about the activities of the **Yarrowonga Mulwala Men's Shed** and the **Gecko Clan (Landcare) group**. There was also a move to form the **NE Victorian Indian Myna Control Network** covering the area of Yarrowonga, Benalla, Shepparton, Cobram, Wangaratta and Seymour. John Shorten of the Men's Shed reports that recent public meetings at **Benalla** and elsewhere were well received and are expected to lead to community trapping activity in that area of Victoria.

In this regard, Ron Fink of **Macedon Ranges Indian Myna Action Group** reports on developments around his way. Earlier this year – after some years of trying to engage the Macedon Ranges Shire in an integrated council / community program with no success – the local Landcare group took up the initiative and with additional funding supplied from five of the nine councillors of the shire, the program has moved forward. All four Men's Sheds within the shire boundaries have begun the manufacture of traps. The traps are being loaned out like library books.

Harry Hof's report on the community program down **East Gippsland** way is very heartening. They now have 600 traps out in the community – traps made by the Fulham Correctional Centre which is located a few kilometres out of Sale. (The goal is also making traps for the Yarra Indian Myna Action Group that Julia Gibson leads). There have been good trapping results – with one person having removed 982 mynas within

The Big Lissy with guys from the Mens Shed and Anton – note the PeeGees trap on left



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the past year. Harry has modified the PeeGees trap a little and their traps have a horizontal – not vertical – one-way valve and an escape route for blue-tongue lizards! Congratulations to the community participants down in the Gippsland.

Camden community gets cracking

26 people from the Camden area attended a presentation and workshop in April that Tracey Poulter from the Camden Council organized and which CIMAG (Ray Barge, Andy Fuller and I) ran. There were many more people interested who were not able to be there. The enthusiastic group took away a number of completed traps. I heard from Tracey recently that mynas were caught next day in one of the traps. There have been three articles in local papers since the workshop was held and Tracey is receiving lots of calls regarding the program.

When Andy, Ray and I arrived in Camden that wet and cold day, the first birds we heard and saw were mynas, so the trapping program is very timely.

Cairns – now setting the pace

The Cairns myna control group is doing a remarkable job. Ron Moon has provided some amazing statistics of how well the program is going up there. 1300 traps have now been built by the Cairns Men's Shed and distributed in Cairns, and traps are also being built by Men's Sheds up on the Tablelands, at Babinda and elsewhere. Ron has modified the PeeGees trap design and that is the one being built by the Cairns Men's Shed. Ron himself has caught 319 mynas in less than 2 years, but the most successful trapper is Warren who has caught 582 mynas in 20 months. That is followed closely by residents of a Cairns retirement village who chipped in to buy 3 traps and have now caught 540 mynas. The total number of mynas removed from Cairns and elsewhere up there must now be in the many thousands: that can only be a good thing. It will be interesting to see how soon there is a discernible difference in myna numbers generally across the city as a result of the program.

Bundaberg / Childers:

The Bundaberg Regional Council have shown great initiative in a myna control program up there. They introduced a \$2 Bounty for each live bird brought to the Council. The main focus of the program seemed to be around Childers. It will be very interesting to see how the program goes and whether it stimulates a broader community interest in developing a council / community program.

Trapping numbers for the last few months

Graham Gliddon's records for captures for the past few months are below.

	Nov12	Dec12	Jan 13	Feb 13	Mar 13	April 13
Mynas	123	288	510	333	263	382
Starlings	49	16	21	34	8	27

This brings to 45,246 the number of mynas captured since we started in 2006.

Get onto the CIMAG email Distribution System and Chatline

To get onto the CIMAG email distribution system for this Bulletin, news and notices from the CIMAG Committee, just send a blank email to news-subscribe@indianmynaaction.org.au . To get onto the CIMAG Chatline, send a blank email to chat-subscribe@indianmynaaction.org.au and then start posting messages.

If you are interested in having someone from CIMAG talk to your organisation or work group about the threats posed by mynas and what CIMAG and others are doing, just get in touch.

Bill Handke
President
CIMAG
26 May 2013

