

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc.

Myna Matters Bulletin # 9



Dear CIMAG Members and Friends

The following provides an update on CIMAG activities.

**** Major Milestone Reached: 10, 000 less Indian Mynas ****

Congratulations to CIMAG members: we have now reached the major milestone of 10,000 Indian Mynas removed from the Canberra region. While not all CIMAG trappers had reported in for March, at the end of March our aggregate stood at 10,001 (and 961 Starlings).

Celebrating special efforts

We have our first “1000 trapper”. Peter Green, the genius mostly responsible for developing the little trap that most of us use, has now reached 1000 mynas captured. Congratulations Peter. An amazing result.

Another extraordinary trapper is Mr Ross Tinson with 906 mynas trapped. Ross has been trapping at a few sites, including at the Youth Haven place opposite Gleneagles in Tuggeranong. This has been a dedicated effort over the past year that warrants public recognition. Well done Ross.

A long-term effort that needs to be applauded is that of Mr Len Davies of Garran, who has been trapping for five years since Dr Chris Tidemann started his trials. Len has caught 875 mynas over that time. As he is not a member of CIMAG, his numbers have not been included in the CIMAG totals.

Most of us will not get any where near these capture numbers, but we need to remember that each myna we take out of the environment is bound to be doing some good.

If you know of anyone who is involved in trapping but not a member of CIMAG or not reporting their figures, could you please advise us or ask them to contact us (via handke@grapevine.net.au or 02 6231 7461) so we can get a more accurate picture overall.

Implementing the CIMAG Strategy

The CIMAG Strategy includes raising public awareness and undertaking public education about Indian Mynas: the threat they pose and how people can reduce the opportunities mynas have for feeding, breeding and roosting. (You can read the CIMAG strategy on our website: www.indianmynaaction.org.au).

The CIMAG Strategy also refers to the need to be involved in a strong research program.

In line with this, the CIMAG Committee is looking to develop information brochures and public education material, and to “sponsor” a research project about the impact of our trapping on myna numbers and native birds. The research project would enable us to clarify the impacts of our trapping efforts. Up to now, we have had a lot of anecdotal evidence that intensive trapping has markedly reduced myna numbers in that local area and seen the return of native birds to gardens. A research project will help to put a scientific base around those general observations. Prof David Lindenmayer and Dr Chris Tidemann (both from ANU) and Dr Tony Peacock from the CRC on Invasive Animals are discussing a possible PhD research project that would give us these answers.

To assist us in funding the public education activities we have applied for an EnviroFund grant and we will also seek funding under an ACT environmental grant program. We are

delighted that Dr Chris Tidemann and Prof David Lindenmayer from ANU, Dr Tony Peacock from the CRC on Invasive Animals, the RSPCA and the Canberra Ornithologists Group have written letters of support for our applications.

Donations

We can not assume that we will be successful in these applications, so if you wish to contribute funding for these activities you can send donations to the Treasurer, the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc, c/- 5 Provis Street, Kambah, ACT 2902.

Getting a Trap

There are a lot of people who have contacted us to get a trap. Unfortunately we have gotten well behind in filling orders, largely because Peter has been crook for a long time. The CIMAG Committee has been discussing ways to catch up. For those who don't want to wait for us to make a trap (for \$60), you can get the blueprints from our website and make your own. If you do so, feel free to contact me (02 6231 7461) if you wish to see a trap before you start or if you have a difficulty in following the plans.

Alternatively there are some commercial traps available: exciting news is that Peter Green and the distributors of the MynaMagnet trap (Bruce and Garry Brown) are commercialising a modified version of the little trap (which we call PeeGees trap) that many of us use. Peter and Bruce have made some variations to the trap — which will be called MiniMyna — and should be available for purchase in a few weeks time. Contact Bruce's company in Mitchell — MynaMagnet Aust Pty Ltd — on 6242 7349 about the details.

Coffs Harbour News

Ron and Lynn Smith of Coffs Harbour report good process on myna action up there: "We have removed the big flocks in Coffs Harbour and are now working on small flocks in Coffs Harbour and also in the out-laying villages and rural areas. We will be holding a workshop and field day in Coffs Harbour on the 4th of September with the help of National Parks and are inviting all Councils and interested groups along the North Coast. Birds captured in March = 34. Total to date = 405."

This is good news and means that these communities are getting on top of Indian Mynas before their numbers build up to Canberra / Sydney proportions.

Euthanising Trapped Mynas

CIMAG is conscious of the need to adopt sound animal welfare practices in our trapping program and for us to ensure that euthanising is quick, painless and stress-free. Following a discussion with the RSPCA - National Office, we are working with ANU to put some facts together on euthanising options (carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide), the time it takes before catalytic converters in modern cars are activated (thereby reducing the toxicity of the gas) and the heat of the gases emitted when using carbon monoxide from a cold petrol engine.

Spreading the message

If you know of groups — social, recreational or work — that you think might be interested in hearing of our efforts and what they can do to help this important practical environmental activity, members of the CIMAG Committee are available to speak to those groups. Let me know (via handke@grapevine.net.au or 02 6231 7461) if there are any such groups that would be interested in our work.

I will be giving another talk at the Australian National Botanic Gardens on 24 May at 12:30pm on the problem of Indian Mynas and what CIMAG and others are doing about them — in the theatre behind the Botanic Gardens Bookshop. Hope to see you there.

January / February / March trapping data

Trapping in January / February and March in the Canberra region has seen the demise of a further 1752 Indian Mynas: while January saw 1078 mynas captured, the February figure only totaled 358 and March 316. The low numbers in February and March raise some interesting questions: are mynas finding feed elsewhere (fruit trees and grapes, insects etc)? ; are mynas becoming trap shy? ; or have trappers taken out most of their local myna populations — which many people have reported — and only wary ones remain in those areas? I guess we will know the answer as the year progresses. I don't recall trouble in attracting mynas into traps this time last year, so perhaps we have been making a difference.

The combined capture data for January - March is as follows.

<u>Suburb</u>	<u>Jan / Feb / March</u>	<u>Aggregate Mynas</u>
Aranda	45	445
Ainslie	2	12
Bonython	0	25
Bruce	0	8
Calwell	13	76
Campbell	0	46
Chapman	8	97
Chifley	58	169
Conder	17	23
Curtin	1	80
Deakin	20	73
Dickson	4	4
Duffy	0	276
Dunlop	0	31
Evatt	0	74
Fadden	13	162
Farrer	62	238
Fisher	13	105
Florey	0	6
Flynn	42	123
Forrest	0	31
Garran	40	381
Gilmore	0	0
Giralang	90	206
Gordon	64	181
Griffith	4	4
Hall	18	686
Hawker	17	139
Higgins	0	0
Holder	0	20
Holt	0	0
Hughes	119	345
Isaacs	0	35
Isabella Plains	0	11
Jerrabomberra	0	38
Kaleen	0	58
Kambah	221	3282
Karabar	10	13
Lyneham	0	30
Lyons	85	322
Macarthur	0	8
Macquarie	24	144
McGregor	0	17
McKellar	28	28
Melba	17	43

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Monash	34	90
Narrabundah	99	140
Nicholls	0	96
O'Malley	12	12
Pearce	101	396
Red Hill	0	66
Richardson	12	83
Rivett	29	29
Scullin	0	1
Spence	0	5
Stirling	21	33
Swinger Hill	0	13
Theodore	87	511
Torrens	21	39
Turner	22	22
Wanniassa	41	144
Waramanga	84	293
Watson	0	199
Weetangera	7	14
Weston	31	210
Yarralumla	72	157
Queanbeyan	0	10
Googong	35	35
Total	1752	10 001

CIMAG News Distribution System and Chatline

To get onto the CIMAG news email distribution system for news and notices from the CIMAG Committee (this is different to the CIMAG Chatline), just send a blank email to news-subscribe@indianmynaaction.org.au and you will be automatically included on the distribution list. This will be the main way that the Committee will circulate information and notices to CIMAG members and "friends".

You can also include yourself on the CIMAG Chatline by sending a blank email to chat-subscribe@indianmynaaction.org.au — if you want off, just send a blank email to chat-unsubscribe@indianmynaaction.org.au.

RSPCA Hours for Disposing of Trapped Mynas

The times to take trapped mynas to the RSPCA Centre for disposal are:

Monday: 10:00am – 11:00am and 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Wednesday: 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Friday: 4:30pm – 5:30pm.

Please take the trapped mynas / starlings to Building A, the Wildlife Building at the RSPCA Centre — it is the very first building in the RSPCA complex as you come down Kirkpatrick St in Weston. If bringing mynas and starlings to the Centre for disposal, could you please use an opaque bag or box in view of possible sensitivity of some people to trapped birds.

Bill Handke
President
CIMAG
1 May 2007