



# Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program





# Wollongong City Council Indian Myna Action Program



## Workshop content

1. Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program Objectives
2. Getting Familiar With Myna Birds And Their Impacts
3. What Can You Do To Reduce Myna Bird Numbers and Impacts?
4. How To Humanely Trap And Euthanise Myna Birds
5. Monitoring And Feedback
6. Getting Started



# Wollongong City Council Indian Myna Action Program



## Program Objectives

1. Reduce breeding, feeding & roosting opportunities.
2. Conduct a humane trapping program that is acceptable to the community, Council and Animal welfare agencies.
3. Survey and record Indian Myna Bird numbers & impacts to assist with program development and research.

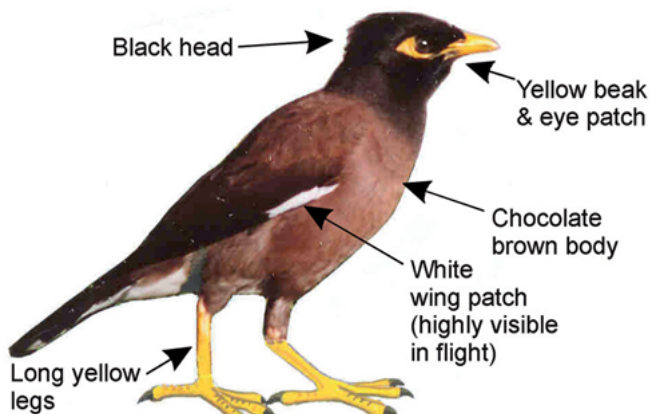


# Getting familiar with Myna birds and their impacts



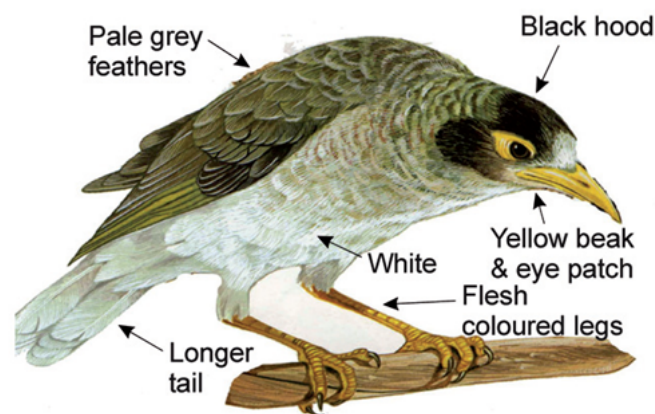
# Correct Identification

Introduced Indian Myna bird



Myna birds most often seen strutting around the ground looking for food, often in places where humans gather and eat

Native noisy Miner bird



Noisy miners are often seen feeding on native plants, eating insects and nectar from the flowers. Noisy miners are a native species, and are protected.





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## Why Is The Indian Myna A Pest?

Native to the Indian sub-continent extends from Iran to Sri Lanka. Introduced to Melbourne market gardens in 1862

Now occupies most of the Eastern seaboard, adapted well to urban landscapes

Breeds more than once a season

Social, economic and environmental impacts

Territorial, aggressive & intelligent





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## Biology

Lays 4-6 greenish-blue eggs, up to 3 times a year

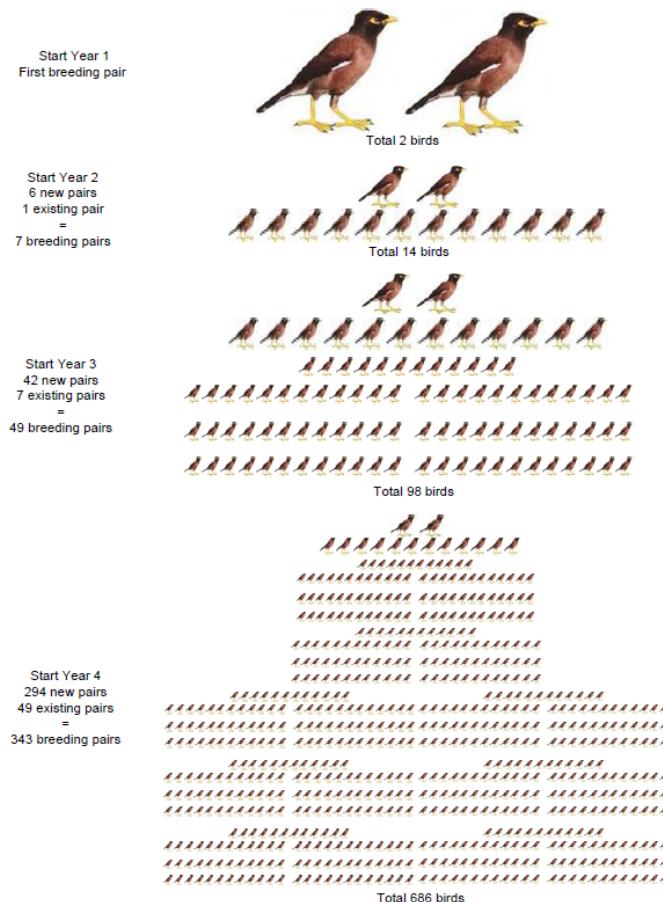
Eggs hatch after 13-14 days, young can fly after 20-32 days

They start breeding from 9-12 months of age

Breeding season is August to March

Lifespan of 4-5 years

When the conditions are right, Myna birds can multiply rapidly...





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## Social Organisation

Forage in flocks of 5-6 birds (can be larger)

In evenings, Myna birds within 1 km radius gather in communal roost (except nesting females and juveniles). Roosts usually comprise 40-80 birds.

Roosts are selected where there is dense foliage and shelter, as well as buildings and under bridges.

Myna birds maintain territories and defend them aggressively. Each territory tends to cover a nesting site and nearby feeding area

Territory can range in size, up to 2ha







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## Impacts to native wildlife

Myna birds take over nesting hollows of native birds and arboreal mammals eg. possums.

They can feed on eggs & chicks of native birds

They drive small birds out of the yard & garden

They predate on backyard invertebrates and reptiles





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## Social Impacts

Bird mites (*Ornithonyssus bursa* & *Dermanyssus gallinae*) can be a problem from nests in roof spaces

Droppings can contain pathogens (Psittacosis & Ornithosis, Salmonellosis, Arboviruses) that cause pneumonia, gastro

Concentrated fouling at feeding areas and roost sites

Excessive noise from roost sites at pre-dawn and dusk



Bird mite sores on arm



Close up of a bird mite



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## Economic Impacts

Costs associated with removing nests and blocking further access

Cost of fumigating roof spaces or houses for bird mites

Costs associated with washing and cleaning outdoor furniture, balconies and cars

Vet costs for pets if they contract diseases from birds or their droppings





# **What can you do to reduce Myna bird numbers and impacts?**





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## Reduce breeding, feeding & roosting opportunities

**Identify roost trees** and remove unsuitable shrubs or trees such as dense exotic pencil pines and palm trees. Always check if you need Council approval before removing trees – call 4227 7111 to enquire



### Reduce breeding and feeding opportunities by:

- keeping pet food inside and feeding pets in the evenings
- stop direct feeding of native birds (water baths are ok)
- block up cavities in roofs
- install gutter guards or bird proofing







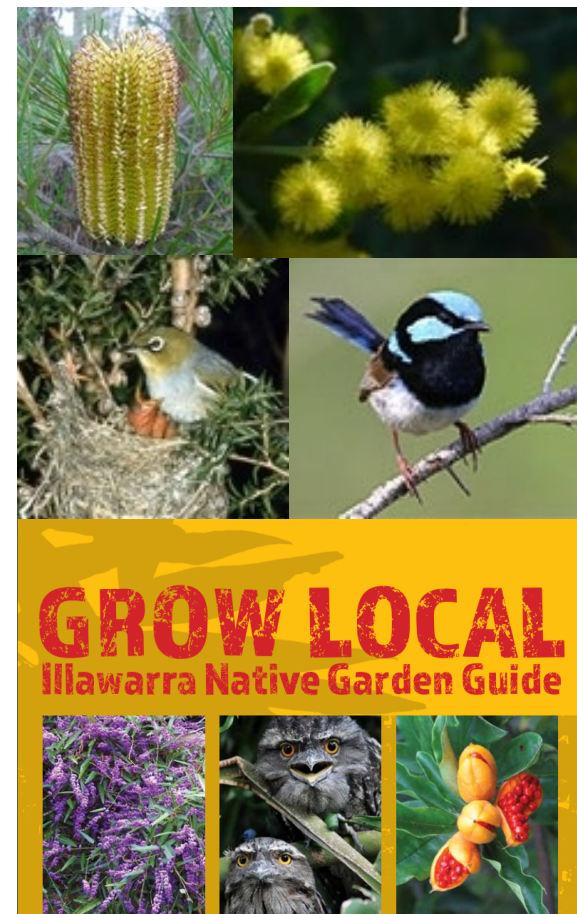
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## Discourage Myna birds, encourage native birds

Myna birds prefer open lawns with sparse canopy and shrubs. **Create native bird attracting gardens** by reducing open space (lawns) and plant native shrubs.

- Buy discounted native plants from Wollongong Botanic Gardens 'Greenplan'. Sale days are the third Friday of each month between 7.30am and 2.30pm
- Council and Birds in Backyards can provide advice on suitable species (links to further information are provided on completion of online training)
- Consider placing a nesting box in your garden (available from Corrimal Men's Shed)





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## Trapping Myna birds

There are numerous types of Myna bird traps, varying in size, design weight and price.

Traps made by **Corrimal Community Men's Shed** are available for purchase for a price of **\$50** (further details will be provided following the successful completion of online training)

Men's Shed traps are relatively small, lightweight, cheap and can catch multiple birds at once

All traps are made by Corrimal Community Men's Shed and all funds go directly to the Men's shed

Men's Shed Myna trap





# How to humanely trap and euthanise Myna birds





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# Men's Shed Myna Trap and its components

Bird enters trap through entrance tunnel at bottom. Tunnels have wire tines which act like a one-way valve. The bird has no other option but to fly/climb upwards through chute (access between top and bottom level) into the top of the trap. The bird can be removed through the wire doors (top or bottom) for humane euthanasia, or released if it is a non-target species.



Perch

Chute with  
tines that can  
be adjusted if  
entrance is too  
wide, or too  
narrow

Water dish –  
always provide  
water for  
trapped birds

Wire doors

Entrance tunnel  
with tines to bend  
in/outwards





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## Step 1: Place the trap in an open area or where birds already feed

Traps must only be placed on private property, to avoid public liability issues and the potential for vandalism or damage to the trap.

Keep pets (particularly cats) away when trapping as the birds see cats and dogs as predators and are unlikely to approach the trap, consider placing trap on table or bench.

To avoid heat exhaustion during hot weather, place trap in the shade and provide water for trapped birds. To avoid cold exposure, do not leave a trap with birds in it out overnight - if necessary bring trap indoors and cover with a blanket





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## Step 2: Commence free feed for up to 5 days

Bait the trap with a food the birds are accustomed to feeding on. Both dry and wet pet food has been successful, or if you have a pet you can use their food as mynas may have already been feeding on it. Small, colourful dry pet food is usually successful.

Place food around trap, on roof, and in entrance tunnel to get birds familiar with the trap.

Do not to use seed-based food in traps as this can attract native birds.





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## Step 3: Start baiting the trap

Place the bait outside the trap to attract mynas to the area, inside the entrance tunnels, and also inside the trap so that the mynas can see the food directly in front of them when they are in the tunnel.

Make sure the food is in the centre of trap so Mynas cannot reach through wire from the outside and obtain the food.

Some people have success by adding a budgie mirror to the lower section of the cage.





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## Step 4: Monitor and service the trap

Do this daily and ensure bait and fresh water are available while trapping. Ensure no native birds or other wildlife are harmed during trapping. Non-target species must be released asap via the wire doors.

Do not put traps out if you are not able to monitor them. Birds must not be left in the trap for any longer than 24 hours and must be kept as comfortable as possible.

Clean the trap regularly and relocate the trap after the area becomes soiled from captured birds, as they don't appear to like being around their own excrement.





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## Euthanising trapped birds

Captured birds must be euthanised within 24 hours of capture. **There are 3 legal ways to euthanise trapped birds:**

1. Cervical dislocation of their necks (break their neck)
2. Injection of barbituate by Vet or approved animal ranger
3. Gassing with Carbon Dioxide (gassing with monoxide ie. via car exhaust is illegal in NSW)

Whilst cervical dislocation is one of the most humane ways of euthanising trapped birds, this should only be carried out if you are confident to do so.

Council offers assistance with euthanasia at our Bellambi depot by appointment. Contact Customer Service to ensure staff are on hand to assist.





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## Euthanasia: Who Specifies Humane Methods?

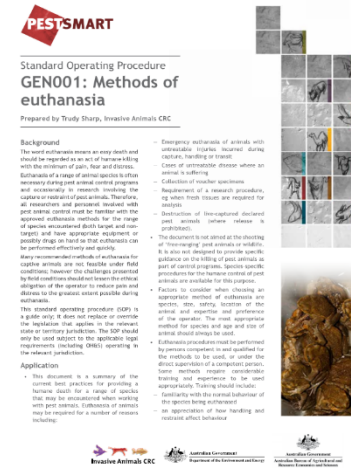
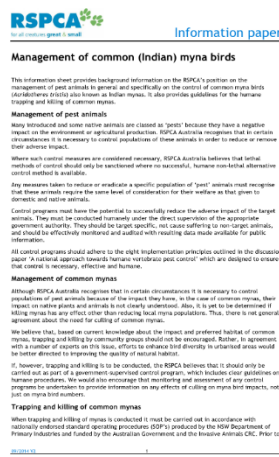
The NSW Department of Primary Industries (State Government) specifies the humane methods for euthanasia for various animal species, including Indian Myna birds. This involves consultation with various stakeholders including, animal welfare agencies such as the RSPCA.

Birds are not to be treated cruelly. Penalties and charges can apply if reported.

There are three documents that prescribe methods of trapping and euthanasia for Indian Myna birds:

1. **RSPCA Management of common (Indian) myna birds**
2. **BIR002: Trapping of Pest Birds**
3. **GEN001: Methods of euthanasia**

(these documents are provided after the successful completion of this course, for your reference)







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## Cervical dislocation (breaking of the neck)

This method is free and is considered very effective and humane if undertaken correctly. However cervical dislocation should only be carried out if you are confident to do so.

If euthanizing by this method, carefully remove birds from the trap by hand or using a hand-held net.

Dislocate the neck by taking the bird's legs in the left hand (if right-handed) and the head between the first two fingers of the right hand with the thumb under the beak. A sharp jerk with each hand, pulling the head backwards over the neck will break the spinal cord and carotid arteries.

Use gloves when handling live or dead birds as birds may carry mites or disease. Place deceased bird in a bag in your general waste 'red bin' or bury in your yard.



### Standard Operating Procedure GEN001: Methods of euthanasia

Prepared by Trudy Sharp, Invasive Animals CRC

#### Background

The word euthanasia means an easy death and should be regarded as an act of humane killing with the minimum of pain, fear and distress.

Euthanasia of a range of animal species is often necessary during pest animal control programs and occasionally in research involving the capture or restraint of pest animals. Therefore, all researchers and personnel involved with pest animal control must be familiar with the approved euthanasia methods for the range of species encountered both target and non-target, and have appropriate equipment or possibly drugs on hand so that euthanasia can be performed effectively and quickly.

Many recommended methods of euthanasia for captive animals are not feasible under field conditions, however the challenges presented by field conditions should not lessen the ethical obligations of the operator to reduce pain and distress to the greatest extent possible during euthanasia.

This standard operating procedure (SOP) is a guide only. It does not replace or override the legislation that applies in the relevant state or territory jurisdiction. The SOP should only be used subject to the applicable legal requirements (including OHS) operating in the relevant jurisdiction.

#### Application

This document is a summary of the current best practice for providing a humane death for a range of species that may be encountered when working with pest animals. Euthanasia of animals may be required for a number of reasons including:

- Emergency euthanasia of animals with uncontrollable injuries incurred during capture, handling or transport.
- Cases of irreversible disease where an animal is suffering.

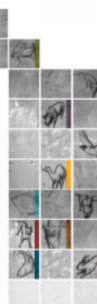
- Collection of research specimens.
- Requirement of a research procedure, eg when fresh tissues are required for analysis.

- Isolation of unvaccinated declared pest animals (where release is prohibited).

- The document is not aimed at the shooting of 'free-ranging' pest animals or wildlife. It is also not designed to provide specific guidance on the killing of pest animals as part of control programs. Species specific procedures for the humane control of pest animals are available for this purpose.

- Factors to consider when choosing an appropriate method of euthanasia are species, size, safety, location of the animal and expertise and preference of the operator. The most appropriate method for species and age and size of animal should always be used.

- Euthanasia procedures must be performed by persons competent to and qualified for the methods to be used, or under the direct supervision of a competent person. Some methods require considerable training and experience to be used appropriately. Training should include:
  - familiarity with the normal behaviour of the species being euthanized
  - an appreciation of how handling and restraint affect behaviour



The method of cervical dislocation described is taken from the 'GEN001: Methods of euthanasia' document



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## Council assistance with euthanasia

Council provides the option of bringing in trapped birds to Wollongong City Council Geotechnical Lab 5 Watts Lane, Russell Vale for euthanasia via carbon dioxide inhalation. We recommend this option.

If you are planning on bringing Myna birds in for euthanasia at this facility, make sure you do not trap on a Friday afternoon or the weekend. **The facility is open Monday to Friday and you need to contact Customer Service 4227 7111 to ensure staff are on hand to assist** (closed public holidays and Christmas shut-down period).

Birds must be either euthanised or released from the trap within 24 hours of capture.



WCC Geotech Lab  
5 Watts Lane,  
Russell Vale  
(next to Bellambi Bunnings)



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## Council assistance with euthanasia

If bringing trapped birds into Council Geotech Lab for euthanasia:

- Leave the birds inside the trap
- To minimize stress when transporting birds, place a blanket over the trap and make sure the trap is secure
- Place trap in a plastic garbage bag (untied), or cover seats and trap with a sheet, to avoid soiling the car seat and minimize stress to birds

Euthanasia takes less than a minute. Council staff will dispose of birds and return your trap to you. Traps should be cleaned out before being used again.



WCC Geotech Lab  
5 Watts Lane,  
Russell Vale  
(next to Bellambi Bunnings)





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## Persevere

Don't be disappointed if you don't catch birds every day. They are spasmodic in their movements, so keep at it. They may have moved to another food source in the area but will return if you keep feeding.

If birds are moving freely in and out of the trap, you may need to narrow the entrance way slightly by pulling in the wire tines. Conversely, if you observe that the birds cannot enter the trap, tweak the tines to provide a wider entrance.

If you have questions or would like to provide feedback on the trapping program, you may contact Council on 4227 7111





# Monitoring and feedback





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## Monitoring and feedback

You can help us further by recording the Myna birds sighted and trapped. We will send you a template for recording the Myna birds you see and trap.

This provides useful information and feedback around the effectiveness of program and keeps the program going.

You can also report Myna birds in your area via the MynaScan website or app.

[www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan](http://www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan)





# Getting started



## Congratulations!

# You have now completed the online workshop training

The next steps...



**1.** Complete the **online Quiz** (must get 100%)

**2. You will receive email confirmation** of successful completion your online training and quiz and a referral and details on how to purchase a trap from Corrimal Men's Shed

**3.** Present this email confirmation, and a form of identification, to Corrimal Men's Shed to **purchase a trap** for \$50, cash only. Only one trap can be purchased per household

**4. Start trapping** and help to reduce Myna bird numbers and impacts



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## Collecting Your Myna Bird Trap

**Corrimal Men's Shed is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9am-3pm**

Located behind Corrimal Regional Uniting Church (enter via lane off Underwood Street) – 30 Underwood Street, Corrimal

Can be contacted on 4283 4994, during operating hours

Cost of the trap is \$50 (cash only). Funds are paid directly to Corrimal Men's Shed

Only one trap may be purchased per household

Nesting boxes are available for \$45 (cash only)



All funds go directly to Corrimal Men's Shed and allow them to continue constructing Myna bird traps





## **Thank you for participating in Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program**

You have now completed the online workshop

You will receive an email with a link to the online quiz

If you have any questions or comments of feedback, please contact  
Council's Natural Areas team via email

[council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

Or via phone on  
(02) 4227 7111



# Wollongong City Council Indian Myna Action Program



## Thanks to the following for their advice and contributions towards Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program...

- Dr Chris Tidemann, ANU
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- Central Coast Indian Myna Action Group Inc
- Canberra Indian Myna Action Group ([www.indianmynaaction.org.au/](http://www.indianmynaaction.org.au/))
- Campbelltown City Council Indian Myna Action Program