

Correct identification

The introduced Indian Myna is sometimes confused with the Australian native Noisy Miner.

Introduced invader: **Indian Myna** ❌

Indian Mynas are most often seen strutting around the ground looking for food, generally in places where humans gather and eat. School grounds, shopping centres, fast food outlets and outdoor eating areas are some of their favourite feeding grounds. They are opportunistic scavengers and will eat almost anything that is easy to get at. They gather noisily in large numbers to roost, often in non-native trees and palms.



Australian native: **Noisy Miner** ✅

The Noisy Miner is a medium sized gregarious honeyeater, most often seen feeding on native plants, eating insects and nectar from the flowers. It is aggressive enough to frighten away cats and other predators but timid enough to be frightened of humans. It is an Australian native and, as such, is protected. Unlike the introduced Indian Myna, the Noisy Miner does not kill other native birds or mammals.



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What else can you do to help?

- ✔ Spread the word. Tell your friends and neighbours about Indian Mynas and the impacts they have on our native wildlife and the risk they pose to human health.
- ✔ Help us by reporting any Indian Myna sightings into Myna Scan (<http://www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan>) This will provide us with valuable data about Indian Myna populations for future management of this species within the Tamworth Region.
- ✔ Reassess your garden - do you need all that lawn? Plant some local bird-attracting plants that are low maintenance and easily accessible from local garden suppliers.
- ✔ Log on to www.birdsinbackyards.net and help with the conservation of native birds in your backyard.
- ✔ Avoid feeding native birds as this will also attract Indian Mynas and other feral birds to your yard.

What is the Tamworth Birdwatchers Indian Myna Action Program?

Our feral bird action program is a community response to the concern expressed by residents regarding the increasing abundance of Indian Mynas and other feral birds within our local area. We aim to achieve a reduction in the local feral bird population by:

- ✔ Raising public awareness of Indian Mynas.
- ✔ Providing community information and resources on how to reduce their feeding, roosting and breeding opportunities.
- ✔ Implementing and providing information on a humane way to reduce the feral bird population.
- ✔ Supporting ongoing research on issues related to local Indian Myna populations.
- ✔ Working cooperatively with councils, agencies and organisations involved with Indian Myna research, education and control programs

Trapping

If you are interested in backyard trapping of feral birds, Tamworth Birdwatchers Inc is able to provide traps & advice. Visit www.pestsmart.org.au for humane trapping & euthanasing options

ADAPTED FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY WOLLONGONG COUNCIL & SUPPORTED BY



AN URBAN PEST THE INDIAN MYNA BIRD

A RISK TO OUR NATIVE BIRDLIFE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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Why are they a problem?



An invasive introduced species

The Indian Myna, or Common Myna as it is also known, has been listed by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) as among the world's 100 most invasive species and has been assigned an extreme threat category for Australia.



It is native to the Indian sub continent and was first introduced into Australia in 1862 to help control insect pests.

Since its introduction, the species has spread to occupy most of the Eastern seaboard. Colonies quickly establish in urban areas, where food is plentiful, and invade the surrounding countryside to the detriment of our native fauna. They breed faster than our native birds, at the same time displacing our native wildlife.

Displaces our native wildlife

Indian Mynas reduce biodiversity by aggressively chasing out or killing weaker, more timid birds and other animals they see as potential competitors for food.



They breed mainly in tree hollows, palms and under roofs, competing with our native species for hollows, destroying their eggs and killing their chicks to commandeer nesting places. This can mean a death sentence for small mammals, such as Gliders, which have nowhere else to go.

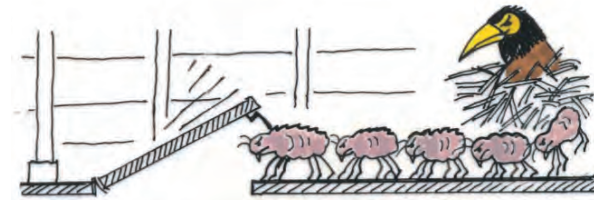


Unlike our native birds, Indian Mynas breed more than once a season. The large nests they build rot after they've vacated, making that tree hollow unusable again by our natives.

Images courtesy of the Central Coast Indian Myna Action Group Inc.

Public health risk

Indian Mynas build untidy nests heavily infested with bird mites. The large amounts of nesting materials used by Mynas provide an ideal environment for mites to thrive. These parasitic mites feed off the blood of the young birds but, will often migrate to the interior of a house, looking for an alternative source of food. Mites enter the house through gaps in walls and ceilings and will often attack people in bed. A bird mite invasion lasts up to 3 weeks and can cause severe irritation, rashes and intense itching from the saliva they inject while biting.



Concentrated fouling occurs at Indian Myna roost and feeding sites like school grounds, shopping centres, fast food outlets and outdoor eating areas. This poses a risk to human health through avian borne diseases such as Salmonella, Newcastle Disease and various other viruses.

In terms of ability to carry diseases, the refuse eating habits of Indian Mynas put them in the same category as rats and cockroaches.

Noise from Indian Myna roosts, pre-dawn and at dusk, can result in considerable distress and sleep deprivation for people living close to a roost site.

Positive actions

To protect our native wildlife from Indian Mynas, there are a few simple preventative measures we can all take:

- ✓ Correctly identify the Indian Myna. It is sometimes mistaken for the Australian native Noisy Miner (see back of brochure).
- ✓ Limit the amount of easy food available for Indian Mynas, to limit their reproduction.
- ✓ Make our environment a haven for our native birds, to increase competition for the Indian Myna.

Deny Indian Mynas feeding opportunities

Ensure that food scraps and pet food are not accessible. Indian Mynas are opportunistic feeders. They eat almost anything but will always take the easy option. They're most often seen where food scraps are plentiful or where people inadvertently feed them. Indian Mynas have been observed carrying pet food and scraps back to feed their young in nest sites.



Try to avoid feeding native birds as Indian Mynas will come looking for dropped pieces. Most experts agree that it is not good practice to feed native birds. Feeding the native birds also encourages Indian Mynas, making them stronger, able to breed faster and displace more of our native birds.



Deny Indian Mynas breeding opportunities

Block off holes in roofs and eaves to prevent Indian Mynas nesting in your home. If Indian Mynas build a nest in your roof, not only is this helping increase their population but it puts your home at risk from a bird mite invasion.



Plant natives to prevent Indian Mynas breeding and roosting in exotic trees and palms. Indian Mynas seem to prefer non-native palm trees and other exotics because they offer more closed-in protection from potential predators than Australian natives. Planting natives also encourages native birds and prevents Indian Mynas from establishing dominance in an area.

