



The Common (Indian) Myna

Information on the ecology and control of an invasive bird pest

About the Common Myna

The Common Myna (*Sturnus tristis*), also called the Indian Myna(h), is native to south-east Asia. It was introduced to Melbourne in the 1860s. Mynas thrived in Australian conditions and quickly became established.

What do Common Mynas look like?

The Common Myna (far right) is about 23-25 cm tall. Its body is a plain rufous-brown, which graduates to a darker blackish brown on the head, wings and tail. It has a white underbelly, white-tipped tail, and white splashes on the wings which are a distinctive distinguishing feature in flight. The species also has a bright yellow bill, legs and eye skin.

A similar but slightly larger (25-28 cm) native species, the Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*) (near right), is mostly grey in colour.



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environment by out-competing native woodland birds and arboreal mammals for nest sites during the breeding season, and feeding on nestlings and fertile eggs.

A public nuisance

In urban areas, Mynas are noisy and unpleasant neighbours, typically roosting in large, rowdy communal groups in protected spaces such as roof voids, large trees or public infrastructure. These communal groups may contain up to several thousand individuals.

What do Common Mynas eat?

Mynas have a varied diet. They are particularly attracted to animal food, such as grains, chicken pellets, goat and pig food. They also eat fruit, kitchen food scraps and pet food.

Why is the Common Myna a pest?

As well as being an extremely invasive and aggressive species, Common Mynas are opportunistic scavengers that eat almost anything, from food scraps to insects.

A threat to primary industry

Mynas damage fruit crops, orchard and vineyard fruit, and feed on stock food and grain in rural areas.

A threat to our native birds and mammals

Mynas pose a real threat to our natural

The Common Myna Project

One of the Kara Kara CMN's key aims is to reduce the impact of feral species on Victoria's declining woodland birds.

The Common Myna Project was initiated to educate the community about the threat posed by Common Mynas and what can be done to prevent the species from gaining a foothold within the St Arnaud region.

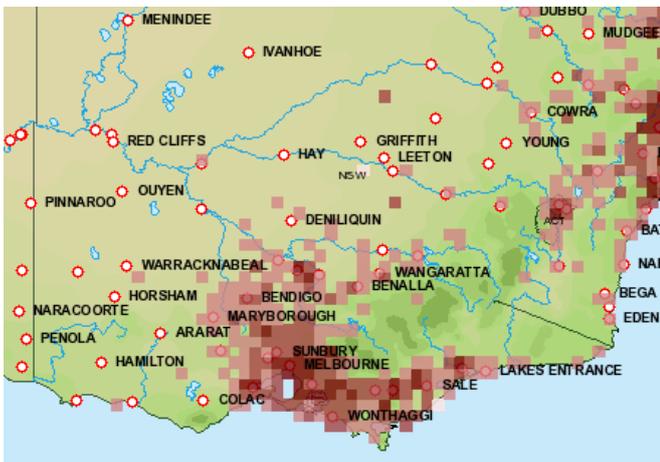
See overleaf for information on what you can do to help.

What is the Common Myna's range?

The latest distribution data from BirdLife Australia shows that the species has gained a solid foothold along the east and south-east coasts of Australia.

In Victoria, the Common Myna is well established in a large area around Melbourne that extends inland to take in Geelong, Maryborough and Bendigo to the west, Echuca to the north, Wangaratta to the north-east, and eastwards along the coast to Lakes Entrance (see map below).

Victorian range of the Common Myna



Source: Birddata database, BirdLife Australia, December 2013.

Is its range expanding?

Since becoming established in Melbourne, Common Myna populations have spread into regional Victoria, typically along lines of human habitation. Mynas are now moving into Victoria's central west, and sightings are common in and around St. Arnaud. The range of this invasive bird pest is expanding all the time.

How you can help

The most effective way to control Common Mynas is to limit access to their preferred food sources. Here's how you can help...

- ◆ If you put out seed for native birds and see Mynas at your feeder, stop immediately, otherwise they will quickly dominate your garden. Don't worry about the native birds; they are capable of finding their own food.
- ◆ Feed your pets inside, or alternatively, keep pet food inside during daylight hours when Mynas are active.
- ◆ Feed poultry in a secure pen that Mynas cannot access.
- ◆ If you feed horses or other stock, stay with them while they feed and clean up any spilled grain or pellets.
- ◆ Cover/bag horse manure around stables.
- ◆ Block holes in roofs and eaves to prevent access by Mynas as well as potential bird mite infestations.
- ◆ Place bird nets over fruit trees or vines.
- ◆ Wear gloves if handling Myna nests.

If you have a large infestation, trapping pest birds using a specially-designed Myna trap may be warranted. The Kara Kara CMN has a Myna trap available for loan (on payment of a \$20 refundable deposit), along with instructions for trap use and where to go for more information about the humane euthanasia of captured birds.

For more information, contact the Kara Kara CMN on karakaracmn@gmail.com or **0428 160 297**.

About the Kara Kara CMN

Established in 2010, the Kara Kara CMN brings together people and organisations who share a common vision: to protect and enhance habitat critical to the survival of our woodland birds, and threatened fauna and flora.

Our area of interest spans nearly 2,000km²; from St Arnaud in the north to Moonambel in the south, and from Morri Morri in the west to the Avoca River in the east. Central to this area is the St Arnaud Range National Park. To protect this important habitat, we work with both public and private landholders on a variety of programs, from revegetation and restoration projects to weed and feral pest control. We also host regular public seminars and field trips to raise awareness within the community about our unique fauna and flora.

The KKCMN can be contacted on **0428 160 297** or by email to karakaracmn@gmail.com.

