



Clarence Valley
Conservation in Action
MYNA NEWSLETTER NO 8
MARCH 2013



CARING
 FOR
 OUR
 COUNTRY



3814 Mynas less, well done all!

AUTUMN IS WITH US

Autumn is the last chance a lot of us will have to catch “these bloody pests” before they fly off to their regular roosting sites. In late autumn and winter Indian Mynas congregate in communal roosts where there can be hundreds of birds. Many trappers may not see them until next spring whereas others may have large numbers so please watch and listen for them and report any you notice on the way to shopping or in your travels (numbers and location) to mynas@cvcia.org.au

Summer has seen us busy organising and assisting trappers across the Clarence Valley. However the holiday period, adverse weather and floods have meant our work was mainly behind the scenes and included quite a few changes to the Indian Myna section of our website (www.cvcia.org.au). Please check it out and let me know if you have any further ideas.

GRAFTON INDIAN MYNA WORKSHOP

Spread the word: the CVCIA is running an Indian Myna Workshop at the council conference room in Prince Street Grafton at 10am on 21st of March—all welcome. CVCIA is not just about trapping we need to educate the community about the threat to our native birds and animals. A relevant saying:

“We only preserve what we love.
 We only love what we understand.
 We only understand what we study.”

NATIONAL INDIAN MYNA CONFERENCE

This is being held in Canberra June 19th, we are looking forward to getting together with many other IM groups. The day includes papers on The Science of Mynas, Pest Management Principals and Indian Myna Control Measures.

Laura and I have been asked to join representatives from two Sydney councils and the Yarra Indian Myna action group to give the CVCIA’s story at a discussion on “Council and Community: What works /What doesn’t”.

An Avid Indian Myna trapper /shooter from Victoria sent us some interesting IM call recordings which he uses to lure the mynas. He finds they are successful in bringing the mynas around his trap or in range. We would like to test them but need a site and trapper where there are plenty of mynas.

Milestone for trappers – January 2013

Bruce from Woolli has been trapping since 2006. He not only uses PeeGee traps but a drop-down trap. “I catch 90% of my mynas this way but you have to be there all the time to pull it down”. He sits in the back room – ready to pull the string. As the mynas are only in Woolli from September to Christmas, his wife was a bit worried this year as there was still a lot of activity running up to Christmas and Bruce was not leaving until all mynas were caught. Phew, they managed to get away on time and no mynas left!



Laura and Bruce with his traps

“I only wish people would take more interest. I have trapped when visiting Newcastle and have set up a few family and friends down there and the number they have caught scares me. “

Bruce’s tally is: Woolli - 267 & Newcastle - 63 since he commenced. No wonder when CIA had a display at the Woolli Goanna Pulling Festival in 2011, the locals hadn’t seen any Mynas – that’s because Bruce has been catching them all.

Bruce recently helped Ron and Dot of Pillar Valley set up a trap. They have so far trapped 27 birds in 3 months. Well done Ron, Dot and Bruce.

BEVAN’S 1,000

Bevan from South Grafton one of the pioneer trappers (since 2006) in the Clarence Valley, has passed 1,000 birds and still going strong. Bevan is not only an IM trapper but a regular cane toad collector and CVCIA committee member. We hope you continue the great work.



Helen & Bevan at CVCIA meeting

MYNAS ARE SMART

Research by Dr Andea Griffin is showing that mynas learn easily and quickly about new dangers. Learning mainly by watching others and listening to each others alarm calls. She has a comprehensive research set up at the University of Newcastle with several student researchers and funded by the Commonwealth Government and several councils.



Dr Griffin and a research cage

Also her findings tend to confirm programs like ours have been on the right track. Mynas are displacing native birds and wildlife from nesting hollows, they do reduce the breeding opportunities of other birds by out-competing them for hollows, and, importantly, our trapping program is having a significant impact on their numbers.

A HELPING HAND

We're lucky to have some extra-proactive trappers who help other people who don't want to trap, get rid of mynas from their yard. The trapper does all aspects of servicing of the trap for the resident and the residents are happy to monitor and let the trapper know if they're required.

If an opportunity arises for you to go beyond your boundary (and a big thank you), please include the following into your plan:

- Make sure that all occupants of the house understand the arrangement. We had an issue recently in Yamba where the wife comes back from a weekend away and finds a trap (with 2 mynas in it – yeah!) in her yard and is upset that her husband made an arrangement with a gentleman at the local pub but didn't mention it.
- If mynas are caught some distance from the registered address of the trap, could you please provide tallies from both areas you are trapping. This will give an accurate number for locations in our data mapping.

MYNAS GO WEST – A CONTINUED EXPANSION

More disturbing news, mynas are moving westwards faster than we had anticipated. Reports are that they are now in sizeable numbers on farmland between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal, as well as being west of Narrabri. We really need to get a better handle of where these birds are: so if you are travelling and see mynas, please go to the www.feralscan.org.au/mynas website and record where they were or let us know.

MYNAS TRAPPED to Feb 2013

2011 = 1593

2012 = 1925

2013 = 296

TOP 10 TRAPPING AREAS in 2012 (2013 in brackets)

Coutts Crossing	303	(21)
South Grafton	242	(72)
Waterview Heights	198	(29)
Warregah Island	104	
Ulmarra	113	(9)
Great Marlow	91	
Lawrence	89	(5)
Palmers Channel	83	(36)
Wooli	71	(2)
Carrs Creek	68	

COUTTS CROSSING MYNA NUMBERS

Coutts numbers may rise as our top trappers are taking a break, Moira is having real problems with crows and Graham is fostering a family member's dog so please let us know if you notice an increase in Mynas.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Some groups are reporting that birds are occasionally being injured in PeeGee traps. They may have been injured by sharp wire ends or edges in the trap. If you suspect this is happening please contact us to arrange a replacement trap as we are modifying all trap to reduce this risk. Also if you notice mynas fighting in the trap - adult males tend sometimes do so at breeding time - please dispose of them before they are injured. Our trapping program has to be acceptable to the community and authorities so we have to have the best animal welfare practices.

Please note:

If you have received this newsletter by post and have email access, please let us know as we prefer to send it electronically.

Email: mynas@cvcia.org.au , laura@cvcia.org.au , kevin@cvcia.org.au , or your area coordinator.

Phone: Laura or Kevin on 6649 4712

Website: www.cvcia.org.au