



*Rescue
Rehabilitate
Release*



**Newsletter of The Northern Tablelands
Wildlife Carers Issue No 89 June 2011
Phone - 1800-008290 www.ntwc.org.au**

The Indian Myna Control Project

Indian Mynas were introduced into Australia in the late 1860s to control insects in market gardens. Originally wide spread in South Asia, they have now established over most of Eastern Australia and are spreading to other parts of the country including Darwin, Perth and Adelaide.

They have become a huge problem in cities and urban centres where they have been able to effectively adapt to a range of conditions and exploit a wide variety of different food types. Mynas also thrive in rural landscapes where agricultural activities provide them with a range of habitats and feeding options. They often congregate near cattle farms and dairies where feedlots are readily accessible. Racing stables and farms with poultry coops are also prime scavenging areas for Indian Mynas.

In addition to being a nuisance in these landscapes, their presence in ever-increasing numbers also threaten native



birds and hollow-dwelling animals in the wild.

The Indian Myna Control Project provides education, coordination support and traps to local communities in northern NSW to help combat the Indian Myna Bird invasion.

This article will help you to:

- ☒ Identify the Indian Myna
- ☒ Understand the behaviour and habits of Indian Mynas
- ☒ Stop the invasion in your own backyard
- ☒ Use Myna traps

☒ Ensure humane handling of captured birds

☒ Monitor and report bird feeding and roost sites

Your local coordinator Stephanie McCaffrey smccaffrey@uralla.nsw.gov.au can help identify trapping sites, train volunteers to use the traps and organise the humane disposal of captured Indian Mynas.

If you would like to report large numbers of Indian Mynas or roost locations contact your local Area Coordinator or www.indianmyna.org

Indian Mynas are a highly invasive species. They are opportunistic and eat almost anything. In cities and regional centres Mynas congregate in areas where food sources are regularly available usually near schools, shopping centres, parks and sports fields.

The Mynas scavenge for food

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Contacts for Northern Tableland Wildlife Carers (NTWC)

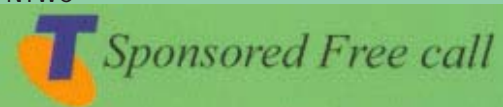
- ✦ Chairman - Colin Wood 0438013500
 - ✦ Vice Chairman - Tony Karasulas 6772 7469
 - ✦ Secretary - Debbie MacLean 67750202
 - ✦ Minutes Secretary: Wendy Beresford 67753747
 - ✦ Treasurer - Julia Rose - 1800-008290
 - ✦ Training Officer - Julie-Anne Willis 6733 5384
 - ✦ Wombaroo - Kelly Stumbles 67321838
 - ✦ Publicity - Colin Wood - 67783329
 - ✦ NWC Rep - Brian Chetwynd 67725854
 - ✦ Newsletter - Colin Wood 67783329
 - ✦ Armidale - Julia Rose 1800-008290
 - ✦ Wendy Beresford 6775-3747
 - ✦ Tamworth - 6762-1232
 - ✦ Tenterfield - Pam Brice - 6736-2462
 - ✦ Glen Innes ` Kelly Stumbles 67321838
 - ✦ Snake Co-ord - Richard Biffin - 6772-3657
- Write to NTWC PO Box 550Armidale 2350

Northern Tableland Wildlife Carers is a network of trained volunteers licensed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. We rescue, rehabilitate and release injured, sick, orphaned & unwanted native fauna. Any assistance please call the above numbers in your area.

Membership \$20 single and \$25 family year for authorised and support members All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

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Telstra Country Wide are also proud to be a sponsor of NTWC



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Wind Farms ~ Are they a hazard to our wildlife?

by Paul Cruickshank of the Dept of Environment and Climate Change and Water in Armidale,

Paul has had a lot of experience with siting and signing off turbines.



When we locate and operate modern wind turbines carefully, risk to birds and bats is minimal.

As with any structure, birds and bats can potentially collide with wind turbines. The likelihood of collision is highly dependent on the locating and operation of wind farms and the characteristics of the relevant bird and bat species.

Impacts on birds and bats can be managed by locating wind turbines away from sensitive bird and bat habitats, and migratory paths. Operations at wind farms can also be modified to minimise risks to birds and bats. For example, operations can be ceased at critical times such as breeding or migrations.

Wind farm developers are required to assess the potential impact of wind farms on animals and their habitat as part of the stringent development assessment process. If approved, conditions of consent require ongoing monitoring of animal deaths by wind farm operators.

More recent wind farm approvals require proponents to make monitoring information publicly available and/or publish it on a dedicated project website. The NSW Rural Wind Farms Inquiry Committee concluded that the conditions of consent

applied to development approvals are thorough.

Wind turbine locations can also be changed to minimise the impact on birds and bats. Some proposed wind turbine sites near Yass in southern NSW have been put on hold to allow further study of potential impacts on an endangered bat colony. These studies will determine the under what conditions these sites can be utilised for wind turbines.

For more reading see Downie C & Macintosh A 2006, *Wind Farms: the facts and the fallacies*, The Australia Institute, Discussion Paper Number 91, p21-22 and the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5, *Rural Wind Farms Inquiry*, 2009, p101-103.

Commercial Harvesting of Kangaroos

Commercial kangaroo harvesters are required to complete a customised accreditation course, which tests their knowledge of firearms safety, shooting skill and understanding of the Code of Practice before KMP will consider approving a licence. The commercial harvester to whom the complaint relates successfully completed his accreditation prior to being licensed.

For commercial occupier's licences, there is no requirement for the occupier to consult neighbouring landholders in order to obtain a licence for their privately owned land. Where a property has not had a licence issued previously, KMP staff verify the property size, ownership and location to ensure that a commercial occupier's licence can be validly issued. All these details were verified prior to the licence being issued on the property to which the complaint relates.

Corrections for issue 88

Eddie's story was written by Emma Cash. The Myth of the Wedge-Tailed Eagle was from Linda dennis' Wildlife Newsletter

Co-ordinators corner; Armidale

reared possum joeys have a new home and a wonderful habitat to explore .

Echidnas; one had a snout fracture after a car clipped it, quite unfixable so it was a sad end for a beautiful animal. Several others have had to be removed from back gardens and frantic dogs.

Macropods hit by cars are a depressing part of the work we do to prevent suffering by euthanasing asap. Often they crawl off the road and lie there for days before being sighted and reported. Thankyou to Tony for doing this job , we know this part is the worst. We are grateful Adrian is now available to cover the Uralla area.

Birds; I enjoy caring for wild birds as they have a much better survival rate and we have had quite a variety come in recently. Mostly with impact injuries , either hit by car or flying into windows. Recently I have had an olive



We are now entering the 'joey season' so do hope some new 'mums' will put their hands up to enjoy this amazing experience and privilege. I am sure lots of you will make it to the 'not to be missed' Basic Care day with Julie and Gary in Armidale on Sunday 29th May.

This season we have had many Koala sighting reports and a couple have needed relocating thanks yet again to Tony who is prepared to gather up these not so cuddly animals. Not all have made it due to illness but it still amazes me how many rock around town and enjoy the healthy Nicholli gum trees planted along streets and in parks. Soon I expect Armidale will rival Gunnedah as a Koala city.

Possums have also kept us buisy with home owners requesting help to evict form heaters and fireplaces. What a relief it is to have Josh Rolff (N.E. pest management services) getting into ceilings to trap if necessary..... he fits through man holes better than we do. He is also able to obtain nest boxes from the Armidale Mens shed so a new home is available within the territory. Di's hand



backed oriole, a satin bower-bird and a koel. All liked to hide and eat a variety of foods but have recovered and are free again. The koel required a lift to Brisbane to assist his recovery in a warmer climate. I must be doing something right at last as I have even managed to release 2 kingfishers who are usually very stressed in care and never make it. Then there have been Tawnies +. These are

absolutley my favorite birds and each one has such a different personality. The 4 chicks have been succesfully released at Dinner Flat thanks to Harold and have the best chance of a good life. Boss (pictured) has recovered from chest injuries , Fluff will need more time to sort out feathers damaged by barbed wire but can fly well. Then there is Tess. Amazingly her eyesight is returning she is so beautiful we couldn't put her down and it is exciting to see the recovery. You will meet Tess at the Bird training day which Kelly and I will be doing in June. Please come , we need to have more bird carers .

Until thenJulia

New website maps koala habitats

By environment reporter Sarah Clarke

The new map will help local communities record koala sightings (AAP: Dave Hunt)

A website has been launched to help communities protect Australia's koala populations.

The Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has spent 25 years surveying more than 2,000 field sites around the country, from as far north as Cairns down to Adelaide.

Residents will now be able to use the www.savethekoala.com site to access detailed online mapping to identify if their local area is home to koalas.

"That's going to give the community great clarity when they are trying to protect their own piece of private land from any threat - coal seam gas, coal, logging development," AKF CEO Deborah Tabart said.

"At the moment they are always stymied because they don't have the scientific data."

The koala currently has no protection under



national laws.

"The AKF has been trying to get the koala listed for more than 25 years and we've been stymied by that," Ms Tabart said.

"Now the communities are going to tell governments that we're going to do it ourselves, but I am still hoping we can get a listing and soon."



Continued from page 1
scraps near picnic areas and rubbish bins. They will also take pet food and bird seed from backyards in residential areas. In rural areas they feed on stock feed, grain, pellets and compost. They foul on the backs of

Indian Myna in flight ~
white patches on wings are a



livestock and contaminate feed bins. They also leave an unsightly mess in sheds and stables where they roost.

Mynas can often be seen on power lines and in open grassy areas where they hunt for insects and worms. They congregate in large numbers in roost trees, making a loud chattering noise and leaving droppings everywhere. Apart from the reduced aesthetics, clean-up costs can be quite significant. Mynas can also

The Indian Myna is an introduced pest



pact on human health, as they are carriers of bird mite and may harbour avian diseases such as psittacosis and salmonellosis.

Indian Mynas are messy birds and nest in tree hollows, palms and under roofs in sheds and houses. They evict animals and birds from their nests, attack chicks of other species and breed in tree hollows rendering them unusable by other wildlife. This is of particular concern, as tree hollows have become an increasingly limited resource for many native animals.

Mynas are well adapted to Australian conditions and breed quickly.

Trapping alone will not keep the Indian Mynas under control. Mynas thrive where there is easy access to food. You can reduce their available food source in the following ways:

Leaving out seed and other food for native birds will attract Indian Mynas and they will quickly dominate your garden. Mynas will totally exclude all other birds and in the long term you may be left with a garden full of Indian Mynas. If

you see Mynas at your bird feeder or in your garden refrain from putting out bird seed until Mynas have left the area.

Planting a wide range of local native plant species in your garden will provide a diversity of habitats for native birds. Indian Mynas prefer foraging in areas with a clear understorey. Gardens with a reduced lawn area containing a mixture of native trees, shrubs and herbs, especially with a dense understorey, will attract a variety of birdlife without providing suitable habitats for Mynas.

Feed pets inside, or if that is not possible, put pet food inside during the day.

Ensure chicken and duck pens are Myna proof. Feed poultry inside a secured area.

When feeding goats or horses, it is best to stay with the animals while they are feeding and clean up spilled or leftover pellets or grain. Also bag manure around stables and cover compost heaps.

Mynas nest in tree hollows, roofs, exotic trees and the dead fronds of palms. You can reduce their available habitat in the following ways:

Block holes in roofs and eaves.

Keep palms well trimmed. Avoid planting clumps of exotic species such as Cocos Palm (*Cocos plumosa*), Slash Pine (*Pinus elliotii*), Radiata Pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Umbrella Tree (*Schefflera*

actinophylla), as these are all preferred Indian Myna roosting trees.

Bird mite infestations can cause severe itching and rashes - if you have a Myna nest in your roof, gutters, a backyard tree or a bird box in your garden, you should destroy it before the eggs hatch. Put the nest in a garbage bag in your garbage bin. Wear gloves when handling Myna Birds and their nests.

The aim of trapping is to reduce the Indian Myna population, thereby reducing the threat to native birds and animals. Reducing the existing Indian Myna population by trapping requires the humane handling of all captured birds. Everyone who participates in trapping must adopt the animal welfare protocol.

PeeGee's Myna Trap

Traps are designed



to exploit Myna behaviour. One example is the PeeGee's Myna Trap, a double-chambered wire trap which is suitable for use in backyards and gardens. It has proved to be successful in Indian Myna trapping programs across NSW.

Talk to your local Project Coordinator for information on borrowing a trap, or to obtain the PeeGee's Trap construction plan available from Colin Wood turton37@bigpond.com. The step by step instructions are easy to follow and the materials required to build your own trap are inexpensive.

New Pygmy-Possum Colonies Discovered



Thankfully we have had some good news on the Pygmy Possum front. The possum is one of our most appealing yet vulnerable native creatures. NPWS rangers and volunteers recently surveyed Kosciuszko National Park in search of pygmy possums, and discovered a rewarding number of these tiny animals. This was a top effort by our intrepid team, who battled record-breaking rain, fierce winds and late snow on their mission. Ranger Mel Schroder and Dr Linda Broome report that 8 possums were found at Mt Blue Cow, up from 5 last year. Better still, 7 of these were new females with pouch young. The team also discovered 3 new mountain pygmy possum colonies at much lower altitudes than other populations - suggesting that the species is more adaptable to warmer temperatures than previously thought. Last summer, the NPWS 'Find it and Fix it' conservation program trapped and removed feral cats and foxes, which prey on this endangered species, from pygmy possum habitat at Mt Blue Cow. The planting of 400 mountain plum pines - some of the possum's favourite food - is also helping to restore important habitat for these tiny animals. The NPWS, together with the University of NSW and the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, is developing a captive breeding program to brighten the future of this species.

Magpies

By Jenny Drewitt

Magpies are one of the icons of rural Australia thanks to their distinctive song. These songs help them maintain their territory. Feeding and keeping their territory free from strange magpies and predator birds like hawks occupies their time.



Interlopers are chased away with loud squawks often by several birds acting as a team. This makes the territory safer for small birds.

Magpies not only live in the Australian bush, they have adapted to life in farmland and rural towns by changing their behaviour to suit new environments. Urban birds have learnt to ignore people and use smaller territories compared to the bush living birds. They have learned to incorporate some of our left overs into their diet and hunt the abundant insects in our well-watered gardens. They are intelligent problem solvers like the rest of their family the butcher birds and currawongs who have also adapted to urban life.

The black backed form is found in most areas of Australia. This black backed form can be easily identified as the females have a grey neck nape. Identification can be difficult in areas where the range of the black backed type overlaps those of the white backed form. Hybrids with intermediate colour

conditions casualties are high for this group.

In New England most magpies nest between September and November. Fledglings leave the nest after one month, learning to fly by flapping increasing distances from branch to branch. Parents feed them for a few weeks until they become competent fliers, but casualties from cars and foxes are high. The young do not breed until they have secured a territory with sufficient pasture and suitable nest trees, usually at around the age of four. Up to six eggs may be laid in a stick nest during the breeding season. Both the egg laying and hatching are staggered. All chicks that hatch have a good chance of survival as the parents don't favour the older or stronger chicks. By autumn the young are expelled from the home range to become a part of the groups without a permanent territory.

Caring for magpies

Immature birds found on the ground are probably still being fed by parents. If you can, just pick them up and put them back in a nearby tree. After a rest in the shade they will probably fly back to the nest tree. The family group will accept them readily. If this does not work you may have to move the immature bird into an aviary to protect it from foxes and cats. Where the aviary is near the nesting territory, the parent bird will often continue to feed the youngster and all you will have to provide is a shallow bowl for water. ~ Check that the bird knows where the water is by gently dipping its beak in the water. Then sprinkle a little bran on the surface and drop in a moth to attract the birds' attention. Secure the water bowl from overturning by adding heavy stones to the centre. Provide clean water daily. An aviary with a grass base is ideal for encouraging the young bird to forage for insects. Aviaries with cement floors have good predator security, but you need to add a shovel full

of fresh soil or mature compost. The ideal aviary is around 3m long with a number of sturdy branches for the bird to roost on and fly from. A weather-proof shelter is needed and a shallow bird bath is advisable.

If the young bird has been removed from the home territory or the parents have left, you will need to become the parent and feed it several times per day.

Releasing birds. Magpies should be released as soon as they have completed treatment, can fly well and are foraging for themselves. Taking them back to their home territory will give the best chance of survival. If this is not possible, housing a group of young magpies together in an outdoor aviary may allow them to become accepted by the resident group over a period of time. Adult birds may even begin feeding them and they can be released as a group with minimal bullying from the dominant birds. Some young birds will hang around the garden of their care-giver after release. These will need supplementary feeding (use the alternative formula for adult birds) for indefinite periods until they get their own territory.

Quolls

Four types (or species) of quolls occur in Australia: the eastern, spotted-tailed and northern quolls and the chuditch. Most parts of Australia were once inhabited by at least one quoll species and they were among the first native animals to be described by scientists.

Captain Cook collected quolls along the east coast in 1770 and recorded 'quoll' as an Aboriginal name for these animals.

Quolls are medium to large sized marsupials with a pointed snout and a long tail. They have brown to black fur covered in distinctive white spots, and cream

to white fur on their bellies.

They are lively and sometimes aggressive animals, with bright eyes, a moist pink nose and many sharp teeth. Quolls are mainly carnivorous (flesh-eating) and prey on a variety of animals. Quolls also eat carrion and sometimes scavenge around campsites and rubbish bins.

Like many marsupials, quolls are mainly active at night, although spotted tail quolls sometimes forage and bask in the sunshine during the day. Quolls tend to be solitary and move around at night within their home ranges.

An interesting feature of quoll behaviour is their use of shared latrine (toilet) sites. These are located in open spaces such as rock ledges have up to 100 droppings piled up. Quolls may also use latrine sites for marking their territory and for other social functions.

They shelter and breed in dens which they build in hollow logs, tree limbs, rocky crevices and earth burrows. They sometimes share their dens with other quolls, and may also use more than one den.

Male quolls travel widely during the breeding season, with mating occurring between May and August.

Females have litters of up to six offspring. After a



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gestation period of about three weeks, the tiny quolls are born and latch onto their mother's teats. Only the spotted-tailed quoll has a true pouch; in the other species the young are protected by shallow folds of skin around the teats, and as they grow larger they dangle from the mother's belly. The young leave the nipple sometime between 6 to 9 weeks, and are then left in the mother's den and nurtured until fully weaned. They leave the nest at about 18 to 24 weeks of age.

Quolls have short life spans, and reach sexual maturity at one year of age. The smaller quolls only live an average of 2 years, while the larger spotted-tailed quoll lives about 4 to 5 years.

Excerpt from Australia's threatened plants and animals, Endangered Species Unit, Aust Conservation Agency

Sydney Wildlife World

<http://sydneywildlifeworld.myfun.com.au/> is a newly opened wildlife sanctuary right on Darling Harbour in Sydney, showcasing Australia's unique and bizarre flora and fauna. Come and visit over 6,000 animals living in their nine natural habitats and eco systems. Take a walk on the wild side with the yellow-footed rock wallabies, majestic cassowaries and meet Australia's cutest national icon, the koala! You can join Sydney Wildlife World and help in the conservation of these incredible animals and environments.

There are always new and exciting experiences to be had at Sydney Wildlife World, no matter what time of day you choose to visit. So come down to Darling Harbour and meet Sydney's newest residents!

Wombats

<http://www.wombatfoundation.com.au/>

The Wombat Foundation is a charitable organisation set up to support activities that aim to bring the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat back from the brink of extinction.



Linda Dennis NTWC member

The Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat is one of the world's most endangered species - it is more endangered than the Panda.

At last count, in 2007, there were only 138 individuals living in a single

isolated population in Central Queensland, Australia.

In recent months selected individuals have been moved to a new location, the Richard Underwood Nature Reserve at Yarran Downs, St. George Queensland. These translocations will help save the wombat from further decline.

You can help us save these mysterious creatures by getting involved, joining or donating to the foundation or you can buy wombat stuff (coming soon!).

The Wombat Foundation was incorporated in 2004 as a not-for-profit public company.

On 30 June 2005, the Foundation was entered onto the Register of Environmental Organisations, enabling donations to be tax deductible.

The objects of The Wombat Foundation are: to assist, financially or otherwise, in the recovery and preservation of the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat, one of Australia's most endangered mammals; to

obtain funds through donations, bequests, public appeals, special events and from the corporate sector; to pursue business interests, commercial activities, sponsorship and other

relationships with the public and private sectors;

to increase the profile of the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat;

to promote research into the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat.



The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service is implementing a major recovery program to help save the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat.

The Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat Recovery Plan 2004-2008 details the research and management actions required for recovery.

Research Reproductive studies
Population monitoring
Behavioural studies
Dietary studies
Trapping studies

Management Predator control
Fire management
Pasture improvement
Establish new populations
Education and information

The Wombat Foundation is assisting with the

recovery program through its funding of research activities and management actions.

The Wombat Research Centre

The Wombat Research Centre is a Central Queensland, established at Rockhampton Zoo in 2001, is a community initiative to help save the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat.

There are two major aims:

1. To develop assisted reproductive techniques on the closely related Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat that can be applied to the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat

2. To raise the profile of the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat by involving the community in promotional and educational activities.

To date, the Wombat Research Centre has been successful in breeding 3 Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats.

Twelve wombats are kept in a system of artificial burrows with adjoining yards. The design of the Wombat Research Centre enables easy access for research purposes.

Development of assisted reproductive techniques

The majority of Northern Hairy-nosed Wombats are males.

Come along to our next meeting at the Tree Group East man St Armidale 19th June to discuss very important changes to our constitution!

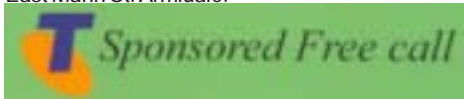
Wildlife Meetings

Sunday 19th June

- Rescue coordinators meeting 10.30
- Fund Raising Meeting Meeting 11.15
- Lunch 12 noon BYO
- Talk on Indian Mynas
- 1PM General Meeting
- Followed by; Special general Meeting
2pm to discuss constitution changes.

Come along and support your organisation

Venue; Armidale Tree Group Woodland centre
East Mann St. Armidale.



Telstra country Wide and New England Mutual are proud to be sponsors of NT Wildlife Carers...Local people working together.

Northern rTablelands Wildlife Carers
PO Box 550 Armidale 2350
www.ntwc.org.au



Check out our Website at www.ntwc.org.au

You can print out your

- Membership form
- Foster Care report
- Milk request form
- Animal transfer form
- Animal report form
- You can have access to most carer
organisation throughout Australia
- Have access to lots of useful links for
education and help for native animals

new england mutual

