Traps and/or Caller Birds On Loan –
Participants Responsibilities and Information Package

Why control Indian Myna birds in the Gympie region?

Indian Myna birds are an introduced species that have the potential to spread throughout much of Australia and are doing so at an alarming rate. They are a problem to the Gympie region’s natural environment, our economy, our social amenity and human health for the following reasons:

- They have an aggressive nature that will outcompete native birds for food, water and nesting sites.
- They are hollow-nesters and will compete and often chase away any native hollow nesting species in the area, even including large parrots and mammals like glider possums.
- Can form large communal roosts, causing a noise nuisance.
- Often will nest in house rooves (when no natural hollows are available), causing a physical mess and fire risk, spreading disease and creating noise.
- Spread disease (for example, avian malaria) and parasites like bird mites and lice; and can adversely impact both domestic pets and humans with allergies (dermatitis/asthma).
- Cause damage to valuable crops and orchids as they are omnivores and will eat just about anything in an opportunistic fashion.
- Can spread weeds/berries through eating seeds and dispersing them broadly.

Council needs your help in managing these pests.

Our program

Gympie Regional Council (GRC) in collaboration with the MRCCC have developed a program whereby local residents can receive assistance with information on control of pest birds, including the provision of the following:

- Loan of Indian Myna bird traps.
- Loan of live Indian Myna caller birds (decoy birds).
- Provisions of a humane euthanasia facility for trapped Myna birds (Co2 gas) by appointment (via MRCCC or Council’s Lands Protection Team).
Indian Myna Bird Control Program

This document outlines your requirements while participating in the program and utilising its’ provisions. It is important that you have read and understood all aspects of this and sign the front page of this document along with the loan record sheet at the MRCCC if/when loaning equipment and/or birds.

If there’s anything you don’t understand in this document, Council’s Lands Protection Team are happy to help. Contact us on 1300 307 800 or email council@gympie.qld.gov.au.

How can I help to control them?

Like many animal pest animals, Myna birds can be hard to control as they move over large distances and don’t necessarily stay in the one location for control actions to take place. However, Council is encouraging as many participants from across the community to partake in the program to encourage the best results possible.

Please ensure you have read the attached Indian Myna Bird ‘fact sheet’ produced by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries QLD to arm yourself with additional options for control and prevention.

Loaning of Myna bird traps

Council and MRCCC have a set of Myna bird traps available on loan to Gympie landholders for use within the region. These traps will typically be on loan for one month at a time and remain the property of Council and must be returned.

Mini Myna Magnet Trap

Trap Provisions:

- Lure/feeding cage (with 2 internal tunnels)
- Holding cage with:
  - 1 x perch
  - 2 x food/water dishes

If you plan to bring trapped birds back to MRCCC to euthanize you will also have:

- 1 x transfer/euthanasia cage
When using loaned traps it is your responsibility to:

- Only use the traps as intended and instructed (for trapping of Myna birds).
- Look after, clean and maintain the traps to ensure you return them in the same state you received them.
- Don’t place the trap in an area that is visible or accessible to passers by. If traps are stolen you may be held responsible for a fee to cover the cost of the lost trap.
- Ensure that while the cage trap is in use you:
  - Always have plenty of fresh/clean food and water available for any bird that may get trapped;
  - Check the trap daily (see ‘trapping help sheet’ within). At each inspection, any birds caught must be removed (except for one caller/decoy bird) from it and killed quickly and humanely (if Myna bird) or released (if native eg: pigeon or noisy-miner bird).
- Ensure that NO native bird is kept in the cage longer than the period between your daily checks and that it is removed and NOT euthanised (it is illegal to kill any native birds).
- Ensure all trapping, holding, handling and euthanasia of any trapped Myna birds is done humanely and in accordance with state legislation and guidelines (Animal Care and Protection Act 2001; Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012).
- It is advised that when handling any birds, you wear gloves as they may carry parasites and/or diseases. Wash you hands thoroughly after handling.
- When traps/decoy birds are not in use (actively trapping for Myna birds), please return to MRCCC or Council so others can continue with management actions.
Indian Myna Trapping Help Sheet
This is intended as a guide to trapping Indian Myna birds.

Trapping without a Live Decoy Bird

• **Place** the trap in a relatively open area or where birds are already feeding/seen. Residents have had some success placing traps under power lines in an area where there are not people or animal traffic.
  - Place/set-up your trap late in the afternoon or evening, when you know there are no Myna birds around. Myna birds learn quickly and won’t approach an object if people are near by (especially if a you use a decoy bird and it alarm calls while you are there).

• **Bait** the trap with a food the birds are accustomed to feeding on. Suburban feeding birds are used to pet food as many pet owners leave food out for their pets during the day.
  - Using small dry dog and cat biscuits has been very successful. You may also try moist pet food meat.
  - If the Myna birds in your area are feeding on something specific (eg. fruits, vegetables, stock feed etc.) then try this as your bait first. They are omnivours, so if one bait type is not working try something else. It may be a case of ‘trial and error’.
  - Do not use cereal and grain-based foods (birdseed or bread etc.) as this attracts non-target birds such as crested pigeons and parrots.

• Put a little feed:
  - outside the funnel entrances to attract Mynas to the cage (this is not so necessary when using a caller/decoy bird),
  - in the tunnel (just a little) and
  - inside the feeding chamber (just a little) where the Mynas can see the food directly in front of them when they are in the tunnel.

• **Food and water** must be placed and maintained in the dishes supplied in the holding cage for any captured/decoy birds. If hot weather, ensure that extra water dishes are included or water is replenished regularly.

• **Monitor** daily to ensure clean bait and water are available while trapping. The best time to monitor is late in the afternoon or evening (so the birds don’t see you at the cage). Replenish food/water at this time also, as they are most likely to come in looking for food in the early morning (you do not want to be servicing your traps in the morning).
Trapping with a Live Decoy Bird

- As above, without the need for food lure/bait at the tunnel entrances and primary cage. A little can be placed if birds don’t seem to be investigating the trap.

- Keeping the decoy/captured bird in the holding cage to encourage wild birds is a useful tool, however the kept bird must be cared for humanely and not allowed to get stressed. No more than 1 bird should be kept in the holding cage to lure in other birds. Remove all except 1 Myna bird and euthanise humanely as per below.

- Shade – adequate shade must be provided for the trapping to be humane. Please ensure that the trap is placed in a shady area (but not under overhanging bushes, verandas etc.) or install some additional shade via shade-cloth or the like to one or more sides of the holding cage area.

Humane euthanasia

Indian Myna birds must be euthanased humanely and promptly. There is a number of methods than can be used, however the most recognised and accepted by RSPCA Australia for the humane treatment of animals are:

- **Cervical (neck) dislocation** – Dislocate the neck by taking the birds 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 aims to herniate the brain stem and result in death. Violent muscular contractions may occur after cervical dislocation.

- **CO² Inhalation** - Carbon dioxide is suitable for adult birds. This can be administered by MRCCC by appointment (please call to arrange a time during opening hours). You will need to return the bird/s in the small transfer cage.

  **Inhalation of carbon monoxide** – cooled and scrubbed exhaust from non-vehicular petrol engines without a catalytic converter are acceptable sources of carbon monoxide. However, Carbon monoxide sourced from the cooled exhaust of older vehicles (without catalytic converters) may be acceptable but may have variable results.

  We understand the above method may not be appropriate for some residents. As such, you may choose to return captured Indian Myna birds to MRCCC for assisted euthanasia. Please make contact with the MRCCC office to arrange a time suitable to deliver the birds. This must be conducted promptly and directly to ensure that added stress to the birds is not inflicted.

- **Disposal** - Dispose of any deceased birds wrapped in paper in your wheelie bin or deep buried on site.
Name: __________________________________________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________________________________

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Please fill in this record sheet during your trapping period and return to the MRCCC when you return your trap and/or caller bird.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this program.

For further information and guidelines on trapping birds and humane euthanasia see www.pestsmart.org.au BIR002: Trapping of Pest Birds & GEN001: Methods of Euthanasia
I, ______________________________________________ have read and understand this document and agree to being responsible for any damage/loss to the below mentioned provisions and to following all guidelines, information and state legislation referred to within this document.

**Your Trap/Bird Return Date:** _____ / ____ / 2020

Trap/s ID Number/s: ______________ # of Caller Birds: __________

PARTICIPANT’S SIGNATURE: ______________________________________________

Return to: **Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee**
Contact: (07) 5482 4766
Returned: ______________