

Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc

Patron: Prof Tony Peacock



President's Report 2009-10

It is my pleasure to present the 2009-10 President's Report for the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group Inc (CIMAG).

Once again we can say that we have had another successful year.

I would like to first recognize the work of the CIMAG Committee: Bruce Lindenmayer, Peter Franklin, Anne l'ons, Greg Flowers, Rosemary Blemings, Marg Peachey, Jenny Bounds, Alison Russell-French and Peter Ormay for their work on behalf of the group over the past year, and to pay tribute to our former patron, Dr Chris Tidemann. I must also acknowledge Graham Gliddon for the many hours of work he continues to do each month in collating the capture data.

The achievements of the Group in tackling Indian Mynas in our region are due to the efforts of CIMAG members. It is their efforts in spreading the word about the threat posed to our wildlife by mynas and in trapping which have been the reason for our success.

2009-10 can again be regarded as a successful year. More and more people in the region are becoming involved in the effort; more and more local councils and communities elsewhere are commencing the task because of our support and lead; and more and more areas are reporting reductions in Indian Mynas numbers.

The success of our collective efforts is easily noticed by the drastically reduced numbers of mynas that we see and hear. Again the Canberra Ornithologists Group's 2009 Garden Bird Survey Annual Report that was released in Nov 2009 records the drop-off in myna numbers: mynas are now the 14th most common bird in Canberra whereas they were the 3rd most common when we started 4 years ago. This is a wonderful achievement — and one that all our 1020 CIMAG members and 800 trappers can be proud of.

I would like to mention a number of activities and highlights of the past year.

We have continued the **public education and awareness raising** effort over the past year. There have been presentations to community groups in Canberra and in NSW and radio and newspaper interviews here and elsewhere. We have been supported in this task by Prof Tony Peacock (our new Patron) during his Feral Hour with Alex Sloane on ABC 666 and by Merylyn Condon on her 2CA Gardening Gurus gardening program.

The CIMAG website (www.indianmynaaction.org.au) is a great source of information for the public and local councils about what can be done to tackle the myna problem. Again the website hits are impressive: 215,480 hits during 2009-10, with 17,651 unique visitors. This is again up from the year before.

Providing support for myna control activities elsewhere has taken up much of the Committee's time over the past year. Our success has been an inspiration to other groups and individuals across NSW and to a lesser extent, Victoria.

Workshops and presentations were given to Lane Cove, Hawkesbury and Baulkham Hills community groups organised by their local councils. Many other councils and community groups were in contact to learn how to apply our experience to their area. The presentations

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and support we have provided have resulted in community groups setting up or in the process of being formed across many areas of NSW. I am pleased to say that over the passed year the effort has spread to Victoria with some councils and communities looking to apply control measures down there as well.

The **trapping effort** continues across Canberra and our district. While not all people who are trapping report their monthly captures to CIMAG—which is most regrettable—nonetheless the capture records show that a minimum of 32,000 mynas have now been removed from the Canberra / Queanbeyan district since the group started. The actual number is likely to be some thousands of mynas more.

The trapping effort was given a great boost when inmates from the new Alexander Maconochie Centre (the new gaol) began making traps for us. We supplied the materials and the inmates supplied enthusiastic labour. The high quality traps being turned out by the “Men of Maconochie” enabled us to quickly reduce the long waiting list of people wanting to reduce mynas in their neighbourhoods. Almost 400 traps have been now made by the inmates: we thank them for their hard work and the Corrective Services staff and management for delivering a good program. This has been an excellent partnership between CIMAG, the ACT Government and the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

We continue to **support good science and research** through our assistance to Kate Grarock for her PhD research project on mynas. Her project will provide some valuable insights into the efficacy of our myna control activities. The five non-trapping control suburbs that are part of her project – Red Hill, Chapman, O’Connor, Campbell and Bonython – will be the focus of a major trapping blitz when her data gathering concludes after this coming breeding season. The CIMAG Committee is also keen to continue the survey work that we have been doing for Kate after her project finishes and to further expand it into a broader monitoring program.

As always we wish to ensure that our activities are ethically based: in this regard we continue to **emphasize** that **animal welfare** concerns must continue to be at the forefront of our trappers’ consciousness. Our public credibility and acceptance relies on CIMAG operating in line with public values.

The **membership of CIMAG continues to grow** strongly. With 1020 members and with around 800 members who have been trapping at some stage, CIMAG has become a major community-action group in the ACT. The continual recruitment of new members is critical to ensuring we have an extensive coverage across Canberra and the district.

For the future, we see advantages in expanding our knowledge about myna ecology and behaviour through a banding research program, and to extend our support for native wildlife through a nesting box program. A big issue for CIMAG in this coming year will be the growing incidence of trap wariness of mynas.

In conclusion I would like to thank all our members for their continuing efforts. We look forward to your further efforts in tackling this significant pest.

signed

Bill Handke
President
6 Sept 2010