

Common Myna/Indian Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*)

The common myna or Indian myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), is a bird in the family Sturnidae, native to Asia. An omnivorous open woodland bird with a strong territorial instinct, the common myna has adapted extremely well to urban environments.



The range of the common myna is increasing at such a rapid rate that in 2000 the IUCN Species Survival Commission declared it one of the world's most invasive species and one of only three birds listed among "100 of the World's Worst Invasive Species" that pose a threat to biodiversity, agriculture, and human interests.

The common myna is readily identified by the brown body, black hooded head, and the bare yellow patch behind the eye. The bill and legs are bright yellow. There is a white patch on the outer primaries and the wing lining on the underside is white. The sexes are similar, and birds are usually seen in pairs.

In South Africa where it escaped into the wild in 1902 in the Durban area, it has become very common, and its distribution is greater where human populations are greater or where there is more human disturbance. The bird is also notorious for being a pest, kicking other birds out of their nests and killing their young due to the myna's strong territorial instinct. In South Africa it is considered somewhat of a major pest and disturbance of the natural habitat; as a result, it has been declared an invasive species, requiring it to be controlled.

There is a Facebook group that you can join that discusses the methods to control them:

Indian Myna Action Group South Africa

Effect on ecosystems and humans

Threat to native birds

The common myna is a hollow-nesting species; that is, it nests and breeds in protected hollows found either naturally in trees or artificially on buildings (for example, recessed windowsills or low eaves). Compared to native hollow-nesting species, the common myna is extremely aggressive, and breeding males will actively defend areas ranging up to 0.83 hectares in size (though males in densely populated urban settings tend to only defend the area immediately surrounding their nests).

This aggressiveness has enabled the common myna to displace many breeding pairs of native hollow-nesters, thereby reducing their reproductive success. Locally this could impact on our local birds such as rollers, starlings, and oxpeckers, among others.

The common myna is also known to maintain up to two roosts simultaneously; a temporary summer roost close to a breeding site (where the entire local male community sleeps during the summer, the period of highest aggression), and a permanent all-year roost where the female broods and incubates overnight. Both male and female common mynas will fiercely protect both roosts at all times, leading to further exclusion of native birds.

The above information was extracted from Wikipedia and a few other sites found on the internet.

Over the past couple of years on Grietjie we have received sporadic reports of sightings, mainly around Buffalo Crossroads and other properties along the Darisandi road. I first observed them at the turn off to the reserve about 5 years ago. We would like to try and restrict their invasion onto the reserve, and we need your help by reporting to the warden whenever you see any of these birds

Please let Logan know the following details each time

Time and Date: Especially important so we don't follow up on old news.

Location: property number or even a GPS or Google maps pin

Number of birds seen:

Any behaviour observed: Were they nesting, flying overhead, or feeding etc.