

# Guide to Trapping

## Welcome to the Indian Myna trapping program. Thankyou for participating.

Prior to initiating trapping, please take the time to read carefully over this guide carefully. The tips and tricks that we have included will really help to you to use the trap successfully.

The trap that has been loaned to you is called a Pee Gees trap. Named after Peter Green, the gentleman that developed the prototype, this style of trap has been used very successfully for a number of years by Tweed Shire Council, as well as by a large number of other local Councils and community groups.

### Things to know before you start trapping

- First up, please ensure that the birds you are aiming to trap are Indian Mynas or Starlings and not native Noisy Miners. Native Noisy Miners are often confused with feral Indian Mynas, however they are protected by law, and it is illegal to trap them without a license.
- Please observe the requirements of the NSW *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* 1979. No bird is to be treated cruelly or with harsh conditions and it is a requirement of this program that you sign and follow the Council's Animal Welfare protocols prior to initiating trapping. These are available from Councils Indian Myna Control Officer (02) 6670 2778.
- Indian Mynas and Starlings are very intelligent and wary birds. For your trapping to be successful you will need to follow the process included below consistently and methodically. You will need **patience** and **persistence** for your trapping to be successful.
- This trap is intended to trap Indian Mynas and Starlings where they are known to come down onto the ground and feed on a regular basis (at least 3 times a week). If you have not yet had these birds feeding on the ground at your site, trapping with Pee Gees trap is unlikely to be successful.
- **Do not approach the trap during daylight hours. Even if you can't see the Indian Mynas they can see you. If untrapped Indian Mynas see you handling a trap, particularly once you have a trapped bird, they will avoid entering the trap.**
- Keep pets and children away from the trap as Indian Mynas and Starlings are extremely wary birds and are sensitive to disturbance. Pets may also eat the bait intended for the birds.
- If you trap any non-target species, you must release them through the door hatches.
- Don't be disappointed if you don't catch Indian Mynas every day. Indian Mynas and Starlings are flighty birds that can be spasmodic in their movements, so keep at it. They will return if you keep on baiting your trap.
- **Provide shade, food and fresh water in the larger chamber** (containment chamber) at all times for captured birds.
- If Ibis start to hang around the trap, put your trap away until they have been absent from the site for a couple of days. These birds can get a taste for the bait and stake out the trap even if they can't reach the bait and consequently ruin your trapping effort if not discouraged in the first instance.



**Native Noisy Miner**



**Feral Indian Myna**

## **Trapping Process**

Included below is the process that you should follow to be successful in using Pee Gees trap. Make sure that you have completed one step before moving on to the next. The time that trapping takes varies widely from site to site and depends on the numbers of Indian Mynas in your area and the conditions that they have been living under. Remember, if you have Indian Mynas visiting your yard on a regular basis and you follow the process outlined below methodically and persistently you will catch them.

**Step 1 – Get your bait.** You will need to use suitable bait. The bait that is most attractive seems to be 'Lucky Dog Minis – Minced Beef, Vegetable and Pasta Flavour'. Do not use grain-based foods (birdseed and bread etc) as this attracts non-target birds such as crested pigeons and parrots.

**Step 2 – Choose a spot at which to undertake trapping.** This should be a spot that you have seen the Indian Mynas on to the ground. If possible, the site should be a flat and open with short grass.

The trapping site will need to be away from sources of disturbance such as walkways and children's playing areas. It will also need to be isolated from your pets, as they steal the bait and scare away the birds.

If trapping in the warmer months, the trapping site must have shade from mid-morning and through to mid/late afternoon.

**Step 3 – Restrict access to other food sources as you need the birds to be hungry to lure them into a trap.** Make sure that any food the Mynas have been accessing at your place (scraps, pet food, chicken feed etc) is no longer available to them. If the birds are feeding at a neighbour's place, it may be worth approaching them and explaining what you are doing, and asking if they would mind restricting the availability of dog food etc. for the time in which you trapping.

**Step 4 – 'Free-feed' the birds at the site you have chosen.** This is done in order to teach the Indian Mynas that there is a safe and regular source of food at this site. To do this, place the bait on a **flat white surface** (an ice-cream container lid or similar) at your site and keep this topped up with bait during the day. Avoid going near the plate when there are Mynas around. Other birds, such as Magpies and Pee Wees, will most likely steal some of the bait, but do not chase them away as Indian Mynas learn by observation and will learn to eat from the plate by watching these less wary birds. Make sure you actually sight the Mynas eating the bait off the plate **before** moving to the next step.

**Step 5 – Put the trap next to the plate.** Again, make sure you actually sight the Mynas eating the bait off the ice-cream container lid before moving to the next step. Keep the bait topped up.

**Step 6 – Bait the trap.** When baiting your trap, you are trying to lead the Mynas into the trap using food as a guide. Put a sparse trail of biscuits leading the birds up the entrance tunnels and into the small chamber. Put a big double handful of bait on an ice-cream container lid in the middle of the small chamber. Ensure the birds will be able to see the big pile of bait from the entrance tunnels, but will not be able to reach it until they have fully entered the trap.

**Step 7 – Retain trapped birds as decoys.** The decoy birds (also referred to as Lure Birds or Judas Birds) attract the other Indian Mynas down to the trap, then the bait guides them into the entrance tunnels and into the trap. Retain no more than 3 Indian Mynas in the containment cage as decoys. Remove and euthanase excess birds each night. Decoy birds must be cared for as detailed on the reverse side of the welfare protocols.

## **Once you have trapped Indian Mynas or Starlings**

- When transporting the birds, lessen their stress covering their cage with a light sheet or a towel.
- Use gloves when handling live or dead birds as wild birds may carry disease.
- Clean the trap. You may need to hose it down or, if badly fouled, use some vinegar and scrub it down. Indian Mynas will not enter a dirty or smelly trap. Relocate the trap if the area becomes soiled from captured birds. They like to be clean and will avoid being around their own excrement.
- Please record all your captures on your trapping record sheet and return this to the Indian Myna Control Officer, as that will assist us in assessing the success of this control program.

**For further information on the Indian Myna Control Program, contact the Tweed Indian Myna Control Officer on (02) 6670 2778 or at [indianmyna@tweed.nsw.gov.au](mailto:indianmyna@tweed.nsw.gov.au)**