

4.3. PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR MAGPIE AND MYNA



Description of the Pest

Magpies and Mynas are both introduced birds. The magpie (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) is the larger of the two. It is about 36-44 cm in length and weighs 280-340 grams. It is mainly black with a broad white collar from the shoulder to inner wing. Both sexes are similar.



The Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) is similar in size to a starling. It has a reddish brown neck, with a darker almost black head and breast. It has bare skin around its yellow eyes. Its bill and sturdy legs are also yellow.

Distribution of the Pest

Both Magpies and Mynas are widespread across the Northland Region, but tend to be more noticeable near urban and intensively farmed areas. They live on bush edges, open land, gardens, orchards and urban areas. They are often seen along road edges feeding on insects killed by vehicles. They are also found in city parks and playfields, and on the edges of both native and exotic forests. They are gregarious and found in family groups of two to 24 birds.

Problems Caused

Magpies are extremely territorial birds and will show aggression to anything that may pose a threat to their territory. They are also omnivorous, which poses a threat to other small birds and animals. Mynas are also territorial but show aggression only to other birds within their territory. They are also known to evict other birds from their nests. Mynas also damage soft fruit crops and both birds damage grain crops.

Parties Affected

All land and the general public are affected by the pests.

Impact Evaluation

<u>Impact</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Potential</u>
Cultural	Low	Medium
Ecological	Low	Medium
Human Health	Low	Low
Soil & Water	-	-
Production	Low	Medium
Public Infrastructure	-	-
Public Safety	-	-
Recreation	Low	Low
Trade (International)	-	-
Overall Regional	Low	Medium

Regional Effects

Magpies and mynas are not a major pest threat to the Region. However both birds cause environmental damage as they attack and eat other birds and small animals. They also tend to inhabit other birds nests, destroying eggs and/or killing chicks. The latter effects have been reported with native pigeons and tuis.

There is no clear evidence that magpies have caused any loss of production within Northland although there have been reports of lambs being killed in other Regions. Mynas do cause production losses by feeding on grains and stock foods. In other parts of the country grain crop losses of up to 80% have been reported.

Need to Intervene

Major control is not necessary as the birds have minor effects on ecosystems and primary production. However, public awareness of the pests and support for individual or community control programmes are considered important.

Goal (Long Term)

- To ensure magpies and mynas do not become significant pests in Northland.

Objectives (Five Year)

- To monitor and understand the populations of magpies and myna and associated effects on threatened native species and on crops.

Tactics and Technical Methods to be Used

Education	Advice to landowners and other interested parties. Brochures and publicity campaigns. Monitor populations and effects and promote research on management.
Services	Regional Council control service on a cost recovery basis.
Regulation	Provide for rules to prevent transport and liberation of live animals. Rule 6.4.1.17 Prohibition on Distribution and Sale of Pest Animals. Failure to comply with these rules creates an offence under section 154 (r) of the Biosecurity Act.

Tactics and Technical Methods Rejected

Economic	Bounties and subsidised ammunition (not effective).
Services	Regional Council eradication service (pest too widespread).

Effects of the Strategy

Beneficial	Protection of indigenous ecosystems. Enhanced primary production.
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Cost of Strategy

The annual cost of the Strategy is estimated to be \$5,000.

Funding

The Strategy is funded from a Regional pest management rate. Any control work will be done on a cost recovery basis.

Management Agency

The Northland Regional Council is responsible for management of the Strategy.

Relationship of Strategy to Other Pest Management Strategies

The Auckland Regional Council does not have a Myna and Magpie Strategy at present. It will however provide advice to people on request.

Monitoring and Reporting

Reports of environmental and production damage will be recorded and monitored. Should incidents significantly increase, and research indicates the need, the Strategy will be reviewed. The Regional Council will report on activities carried out in its Annual Plan or LTCCP as appropriate.

Term of Strategy

5 years

Rules**6.4.1.17** **Prohibition on Distribution and Sale of Pest Animals**

No person shall distribute to other persons or offer for sale or hold in a premises where animals are offered for sale any live pest animal, which is subject of a Northland Regional Council Pest Management Strategy, except to slaughter.