

## POISONING

Although the poison Alphachloralose mixed with mutton fat can be used on magpies it is usually not the best method of control and inexperienced people should seek advice first.

For more information on magpies contact Northland Regional Council Biosecurity staff on 0800 002 004 or refer to the Regional Pest Management Strategies at

[www.nrc.govt.nz/pestmanagement](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/pestmanagement)

For more magpie control information go to:  
[www.npca.org.nz](http://www.npca.org.nz) or [www.ermanz.govt.nz](http://www.ermanz.govt.nz)

## Contact us:

For further information contact  
Northland Regional Council Biosecurity staff  
**0800 002 004** or [www.nrc.govt.nz](http://www.nrc.govt.nz)

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## ANIMAL PESTS

### Magpies



# Magpies

*Gymnorhina tibicen*

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Shooting | Trapping | Poisoning

Putting Northland first



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Magpies were introduced from Australia in the 1860s. There are two subspecies; the white-backed, which is the most common, and the black-backed. The two interbreed and produce individuals with varying amounts of black and white.

Magpies eat a variety of insects, seeds and vegetable matter. They also rob the nests of smaller birds, taking eggs and nestlings. They are territorial and aggressive and are known to attack, kill or drive off other birds including native species. Nesting magpies may attack humans and can cause serious harm, especially to children.

Magpies are fairly large birds, generally 36-44cm in length and weighing 280-340g. They prefer open grasslands and cultivated paddocks with trees nearby for shelter and nesting. They live in family groups of up to 24 birds, usually building nests in tall trees.

## CONTROL METHODS

Magpies learn very quickly, so there is usually only one chance to capture or destroy a bird. If an attempt fails, the magpie will be very difficult to get the second time round.

## SHOOTING

A tape-recording of a magpie's distress call is available and can be used to lure the birds into an area where they can be shot. A decoy – such as another magpie – can also be used as a visual attraction.

You must have a licence before using a firearm. Use a gun with extreme care, especially where there are likely to be people or animals nearby.

## TRAPPING

Live capture traps are cages with a spring-loaded door which is sprung by the bird when it enters. Alternatively, a possum cage trap can be modified to catch magpies.

Magpies can be attracted by pre-feeding first with cat food or dog roll outside the trap. Colourful and shiny objects will also attract magpies to traps as they are often very curious birds.

A captured bird may also be used as a call bird by placing it in a compartment inside the trap to lure in other birds. A magpie put into another magpie's territory will certainly get the attention of the resident birds and lure them into the trap.

