

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Council on the front foot with myna control

January 17, 2019
COOKTOWN

Cook Shire Council has teamed up with the South Cape York Catchments Group and the community to tackle a newly discovered invasive pest in the Cooktown area.

The Indian myna bird, which poses a serious threat to the environment, human health and the local economy, was first spotted in Cooktown in 2018. Council is calling for residents to be involved in a trapping program, and also to report sightings of the birds. "The traps won't injure the birds, and all non-target species will be released," Cook Shire Council Biosecurity Manager Darryn Higgins said. "Myna birds are a serious pest, pushing out native bird species, spreading mites and destroying fruit crops. Council and the Catchment Group are working proactively to control the spread in our area."

The Indian myna, originally introduced in the 1800s, has a black head, chocolate brown body and distinctive yellow legs, beak and eye mask. Mynas displace native birds at breeding time and hunt baby birds, as well as inhabiting nest holes and reducing breeding opportunities for native birds. The pests also destroy fruit crops and spread weed species, and pose a risk to human health by transferring mites.

For more information, visit the Biosecurity page on Council's website, or to report a myna bird sighting or request to be part of the trapping program, contact Council's Biosecurity team via email to mail@cook.qld.gov.au or phone on 4069 5444 or phone South Cape York Catchments on 4069 5443.

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