

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRE-DAWN SINGING OF THE AUSTRALIAN MAGPIE *Gymnorhina tibicen tibicen*

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This study investigated the pre-dawn song of four male Australian Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen tibicen* resident in a north Brisbane suburb; one bird over three breeding seasons (2001-2003), the other three birds for one breeding season (2003). Pre-dawn singing by a solitary male magpie commenced in late July with a peak of both early song start and song duration in September, after which both declined until cessation in October/November. This pre-dawn song started and almost always ended before dawn and was sung continuously every morning for varying periods of time but never from the nest tree. It began as a low volume song during the first weeks of the breeding season while the eggs were being laid and increased in volume within a few weeks to a clear and widely audible song in early to mid-August while the eggs and/or chicks were in the nest. This song continued until late October-early November when it became discontinuous and was interspersed with challenging territorial calls.